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W. Macpherson
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July 1852

AN ACCOUNT

OF THE

RELIGION OF THE KHONDS

IN

ORISSA.

BY

CAPTAIN S. CHARTERS MACPHERSON,

MADRAS ARMY,

Late Agent for the Suppression of Meriah Sacrifice and Female Infanticide in the Hill Tracts of Orissa.

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RELIGION OF THE KHONDS.

INTRODUCTION.

The Khonds—one of the Primitive Races of India. Their Relation to the Governments, and to the Zemindars of Orissa. Sources of Information respecting their Religion.

When the people which spread the Brahminical religion and institutions from the valley of the Ganges, extended them, by migration and conquest, over the Indian peninsula, large portions of the primitive population remained unsubdued and unconverted where physical circumstances specially favoured their resistance to force and to the pressure of moral influences; and accordingly, numerous remnants of them are now seen, scattered widely under the most various aspects, and often under highly interesting relations to the dominant people.

The physical conditions most favourable to the preservation of the aboriginal races were combined in high perfection and on a great scale, in the portion of the north-eastern quarter of the Peninsula nearly comprised between the Vindhya range on the north, the eastern chain of Ghauts, and a line connecting these drawn from the mouth of the Godavery to the centre of the valley of the Nerbudda;—a region composed of lofty and rugged mountains, impenetrable forests, swampy woodlands, and arid wastes, interspersed with extensive tracts of open and productive plain, and possessing a climate in many districts highly pestilential, while, for strangers, it is salubrious in the open country alone. In that territory, large remnants of no fewer than five peoples who claim to be children of the soil—the Khonds, the Koles, the Sourahs, the Goands, and the Bheels,—have preserved, with various degrees of purity and distinctness, their race, their institutions, their language, and their superstitions. Wholly or in part within it, kingdoms were established by the Oriyah, the Telugu, the Mahratta, and the Rajpoot divisions of the Brahminical people; and between the ancient races and each of those kingdoms, strikingly contrasted in their genius and institutions, connections have sprung up, the most diversified in their origins and their forms, but having one common tendency—towards

the supersession and obliteration of the ancient and ruder by the more civilized people—worked out, consciously and unconsciously, through the gradual assimilation of manners, through proselytism to the Hindu or the Mahomedan faith, and through the fusion of races, notwithstanding every barrier of caste and custom.

Of these Hindu kingdoms, the ancient state of Orissa was formed chiefly from the territories of three of the primitive peoples, the Khonds, the Koles, and the Sourahs. In the ninth century, when the dominion of Orissa was at its height, its great social features bore the same general relation to its geographical divisions which they now present; and I conceive that, by briefly indicating those features and that relation, I may best exhibit the main facts of the position in which the remnants of the primitive races, and of the Khond race in particular, have stood towards the conquering people.

The Orissan form of polity may be broadly defined to have been a despotic monarchy limited by a military aristocracy, while theocratic influences predominated. The sovereigns of its historical dynasties, from A.D. 473 to A.D. 1558, are celebrated for magnificence in their courts, and their public works; as successful in their wars of aggression; as liberal promoters of learning and the arts; and superstitiously devoted to the interests of their faith; while their power was amongst the last in the Peninsula which was overthrown by the Mahomedans.

The body of territorial Nobles were highly elevated in respect of rank, power, and possessions. They all bore the title of Rajah. They held, generally in virtual independence, estates of great extent, yielding large revenues. From their exclusive relations with the unsubdued portions of the primitive races, enabling them to command their wild valour, they derived considerable power. And they mainly wielded the great distinctive institution of Orissa—its *Paiks*, or hereditary landed militia, an army numbering from a hundred and fifty thousand to three hundred thousand foot soldiers.

The Orissan Hierarchy was the most splendidly endowed in India; presiding, in the sixth century, over Bhovaneswur with its six thousand shrines; and administering, from the twelfth century, the great pantheon of Juggernaut, at Pooree, whose "sacred territory" was above a hundred miles in length. Its members, moreover, generally held the chief civil offices, both under the state and in the domains of the Rajahs.

In the ninth century, the Orissan territory extended from the

valley of the Ganges to the banks of the Godavery, measuring six degrees in latitude, while its average breadth was about three degrees of longitude, and the eastern chain of Ghauts, running at an average distance of seventy miles from the coast of Coromandel, traversed its whole length. From the eastern side of the great mountain range, its innumerable buttresses and offshoots spread over the adjacent plain to within a few miles of the sea. Upon the west, the range is generally supported by compact plateaux, series of broad ridges, and expanses of elevated plain; and thus, the whole country is naturally divided, although by no distinct lines of demarcation, into an alpine, a sub-alpine, and a maritime region.

The Maritime division extends along the whole sea-board, nearly four hundred miles in length, with an average breadth of fifteen miles. It is an open, salubrious, well peopled, and highly productive expanse, with the exception of several groups of barren hills, and a tract of marshy and wooded deltas intersected by lagunes. The open and fertile parts of this territory formed the state domain of Orissa, and included a large portion of the religious lands. The wilder districts were partitioned into estates, or zemindaries, of very various value and extent. The primitive races were expelled from the whole of this seaward territory, save where they were permitted to linger in its sequestered and unhealthy tracts, occupying lands on half-servile tenures.

The Subalpine region comprised above one-half of the entire area of the kingdom. It forms a vast expanse of hilly wastes, entangled forests, and rugged watercourses, exceedingly unhealthy, but interspersed with beautiful and fertile valleys, and occasionally broken by broad and productive plains. This region was divided into a large number of zemindaries, the domains of the titular rajahs of Orissa.

These zemindaries vary from inconsiderable estates to territories of great dimensions,—petty principalities which have made a considerable figure in the modern history of the eastern division of the Peninsula. The more important of them are possessed by families which trace their descent from the royal houses of Orissa, or from the principal stocks of Rajputana. A considerable number were originally planted by the Orissan sovereigns along the hill frontier of their state domain, for its protection from the incursions of the dispossesed races. Others were founded by great hereditary officers of revenue and justice,

through the gradual conversion of their administrative into proprietary rights. Successful military chiefs and leaders of predatory bands, also, occasionally carved out great domains for themselves and their followers. And, in some quarters, portions of the ancient population, where still unsubdued, formed zemindaries by inviting junior members of influential zemindary houses to become their Rajahs.

The Zemindars were bound by their tenures under the state to maintain, and bring into the field, large contingents of the national landed soldiery; to pay tribute, in some cases heavy, in some nominal; to perform special services, both public, and personal to the sovereign; and to receive at his hands investiture with their honours and domains.

The origin and spirit of the relation between the Zemindars and the landed militia of Orissa are plain. When the Hindus obtained, by force or fraud, a portion of territory from the primitive occupants, driving them back into the inner tracts of mountain and forest, the location upon it of a body of soldiers, holding lands on the condition of hereditary service, could alone give to the conquest security and value. The rivalries of the zemindars, and the terms of their tenures under the state, obliged them to maintain, and often to increase, that soldiery even where the necessity in which it had originated ceased to exist. The zemindars stood to it simply in the relation of military patrons; while its chief officers, on whom they depended for the execution of every measure of defence or aggression, greatly influenced and often controlled their councils.

The aboriginal peoples have existed within the zemindaries in two distinct positions.

In the more open tracts, they were generally reduced, as in the state domain, to a semi-servile condition; the Khonds, for example, dwelling in petty hamlets, their services appropriated by the Rajah to supply himself and his officers with jungle produce, or assigned by him to particular villages or temples, and bearing the appellation of "Vettiah," or "labouring without hire."

Amongst the rugged bases of the mountain chain, the aboriginal tribes, on their subjugation, did not fall into servitude, but became free subjects of the zemindars, cultivating the soil on the usual rent tenure, or living by military service, or enrolled amongst the landed militia. They have everywhere tended—and the process goes on daily by the most curious steps

—to become assimilated to their conquerors in manners and religion; and the Khonds, in particular, have formed by intermixture with them new castes, many of which hold a respectable place within the pale of Hindu society.

Lastly,—beyond the *proper* limits of the Zemindaries—in the Alpine region, comprising the central ridges, the lofty plateaux, and the inner valleys of the chain of Ghauts, large portions of the primitive races remain imperfectly subdued, while some have maintained their independence against the utmost efforts of the Hindus. The Zemindaries being interposed between this population and the state-domain, the Zemindars have had relations with it to the almost complete exclusion of the successive governments of Orissa, and have formed connections with its several divisions, endlessly varied in their spirit and details, but generally upon equal terms, being founded upon a plain common interest—that of defence against aggression. In the quarter of the Khond people for example—the Zemindars having been ever at feud with one another and prone to resistance to the state, while the mountain tribes were exposed to attack by every adventurer who might hope to seize their lands—there have arisen between each Zemindar and the cluster of unsubdued tribes bordering on his domain, alliances for mutual defence, in which, while the tribes have a part and rank distinctly subordinate, their independence is recognised and equal advantages are stipulated.

Since the extinction of the native monarchy, the zemindar Rajahs have acknowledged, in succession, the supremacy of Delhi, of the Mahratta power, and of our empire; but, secure in their mountain strongholds and pestilential climate, they have generally yielded to these governments a precarious and unfruitful allegiance, exercising, with few practical limitations, all the powers of independent sovereignty,—reigning the haughty and uncontrolled despots of their wild domains, until, compelled by their revolts, we have penetrated their unexplored mountain barriers, assumed the territories of a few families, and bent others to our yoke.

Of the primitive peoples, the Koles prevail in the northern division of Orissa, the Khonds in the middle portion, and the Sourahs in the south. The Khonds are now seen within the following ill defined limits. Upon the eastern side they appear in the wilder tracts of the Ganjam district bordering upon the Chilka lake, and touch in that quarter the coast of the Bay of Bengal. On the northwest, they are found on the boundaries

of Gondwana, in Long. 83°; while on the west, they extend to an unknown distance within the unsurveyed frontier of the Nagpore state. They are found as far south as Bustar in Lat. 9° 40″, while the zemindary of Palconda, in the Vizagapatam district, is possessed by a Khond chief. On the south, the Khonds are replaced in the zemindary of Pedda Kimedy, in the Ganjam district, by the Sourah race, which is said thenceforward generally to occupy the eastern acclivities of the Ghauts to the Godavery. To the north, fifty miles beyond the Mahanuddee, in the meridian of Boad, the Khonds are succeeded by the Kole people. On the north-east, they are found high in Cuttack; while Sourahs (not identified with the Sourahs of the south) inhabit there the inferior ridges of the Ghauts.

The British government first came into immediate contact with the mountain Khonds in 1835, whilst engaged in military operations for the reduction of the zemindary of Goomsur in the Ganjam district, whose Rajah had rebelled and taken refuge amongst them. Upon the completion of those operations in 1837, I was employed in surveying a portion of the newly acquired district and the unexplored tracts around it. In performing that duty, I was enabled to obtain a considerable amount of information respecting the language, manners, institutions, and religion of the Khonds, then almost entirely unknown. That information, professedly very incomplete, was embodied in a Report, written by order of the Madras government in June 1841, and afterwards printed by the government of India. When I returned to the Khond country in that year, as an Assistant to the Agent of the Government in the Ganjam District, I found that I had previously visited only the tribes belonging to one of the two great antagonist sects into which the Khonds are divided, and that I had, thence, erroneously described the tenets and observances of that sect as constituting the whole system of Khond religion. My present object is to correct that error from the information which I have been enabled to obtain during my long subsequent connection with the people as a subordinate, or the chief, Agentof the Government for the suppression amongst them of the practices of Human Sacrifice and Female Infanticide.

The Khond religion exists in oral traditions alone, and the priesthood by which these are preserved is neither hereditary nor strictly organised as a profession; nevertheless, the ceremonials of the gods, composed of rites, invocations, hymns, legends and recitals, form a repository of materials, doctrinal and ritual, from which the main outlines and spirit of the superstition may be authentically deduced. And, through enquiries systematically addressed to the best informed priests and laymen whose full confidence has been gained, the doctrines which do not naturally find a place in the ceremonials, and all the details of these, may be ascertained. Still, with respect to every portion of the following account of the Khond superstition, I beg that, in addition to the obvious difficulty, under any circumstances, of ascertaining and describing from oral statements the opinions, feelings, and sentiments which constitute a system of religion, the following special sources of error may be kept in view. Only the leading ideas, the chief formalities, and the most familiar and significant expressions of this religion are distinctly fixed in the minds even of the best informed of its rude professors. The details of doctrines and of rites, of legends and narratives, vary in every district, and even in different parts of the same district; according as the population belongs to one or other of the two great antagonist sects, and according to the fancies of the officiating priests. Upon many subjects, for instance, there are many different legends, all equally current and equally believed, so that the one which I give is to be considered merely as a sample of those that exist. And hence, in the attempt to present in exact language and a systematic form, a body of traditional ideas, I fear that I have, perhaps unavoidably, imparted to the subject an appearance of theoretical completeness and consistency which does not strictly belong to it.

I have to add, that these descriptions are drawn exclusively from the Khond country of the zemindary of Goomsur, and from those portions of the zemindaries of Boad, Duspullah, Souradah, and some neighbouring tracts with the usages of which I am best acquainted.

All the principal legends, hymns, and recitals were taken down by me as they were spoken or intoned by well informed priests or laymen in the Khond language, and, on account of my imperfect knowledge of that language, translated line by line into Oriya and Hindostanee by persons highly qualified for the task. My late very able and deeply lamented friend Dr. Cadenhead, who was

Principal Assistant in the Orissan Hill Agency, and a perfect master of the Khond language, also obtained these legends in it, in many cases from sources distinct from mine, and collated my versions with his own made directly from the originals. And lastly, to obtain the inestimable advantage of Dr. Cadenhead's mature views upon every part of this attempt to describe the Khond religion, I sent a draft of it to him in India, which I received back enriched with comments upon every point on which he differed from me, or upon which he could add to my information, either from his own sources or by communicating with the late Soonderah Sing Deo, the Hindu gentleman who was principal native assistant to the Agency, and whose services in that capacity cannot be overrated.

SECTION I.—THE RELIGIOUS DOCTRINES OF THE KHONDS.

Doctrines common to all the Tribes.

There is one Supreme Being, self-existing, the source of Good, and Creator of the Universe, of the inferior gods, and of man. This divinity is called in some districts, Boora Pennu or the God of Light; in others, Bella Pennu, or the Sun God; and the sun and the place from which it rises beyond the sea are the chief seats of his presence.

Boora Pennu, in the beginning, created for himself a consort who became Tari Pennu, or The Earth Goddess, and the source of Evil. He afterwards created the Earth. As Boora Pennu walked upon it with Tari, he found her wanting in affectionate compliance and attention as a wife,* and resolved to create from its substance a new being, Man, who should render to him the most assiduous and devoted service, and to form from it also every variety of animal and vegetable life necessary to man's existence. Tari was filled with jealousy, and attempted to prevent his purpose, but succeeded only so far as to change the intended order of creation. In the words of a generally received legend:—"Boora Pennu took a handful of earth and threw it behind him to create man; but Tari caught it ere it fell, and cast it on one side, when trees, herbs, flowers, and every form of vegetable life sprang up. Boora Pennu again threw a handful of earth behind him; but Tari caught it in like manner and cast it into the sea, when fish and all things that live in water were generated. Boora threw a third handful of earth behind him, which also Tari intercepted and flung aside, when all the lower animals, wild and tame, were formed. Boora cast a fourth handful behind him, which Tari caught and threw up into the air, when the feathered tribes and all creatures which fly were produced. Boora Pennu, looking round, perceived what Tari had done to frustrate his intentions, and, laying his hand upon her head to prevent her further interference, he took up a fifth handful of earth and placed it on the ground behind him; and from it the

* There are various accounts given of the nature of Tari's neglect—one of the most generally received being that she refused to scratch the back of Boora's neck when requested to do so.

human race were created. Tari Pennu then placed her hands over the earth, and said 'Let these beings you have made exist; you shall create no more!' Whereupon Boora caused an exudation of sweat to proceed from his body, collected it in his hand, and threw it around, saying—'To all that I have created!' and thence arose love and sex and the continuation of species."

The creation was perfectly free from moral and physical evil. Men enjoyed free intercourse with the Creator. They lived without labour upon the spontaneous abundance of the earth; they enjoyed everything in common, and lived in perfect harmony and peace. They went unclothed. They had power to move not only on the earth, but through the air and the sea. The lower animals were all perfectly innocuous.

The Earth Goddess, highly incensed at the love shown towards man thus created and endowed, broke into open rebellion against Boora, and resolved to blast the lot of his new creature by the introduction into the world of every form of moral and physical evil. She instilled into the heart of man every variety of moral evil, "sowing the seeds of sin in mankind as into a ploughed field," and at the same time, introduced every species of physical evil into the material creation—diseases, deadly poisons, and every element of disorder. Boora Pennu, by the application of antidotes, arrested and held in abeyance the elements of physical evil; but he left man perfectly free to receive or to reject moral evil.

A few individuals of mankind entirely rejected evil, and remained sinless; the rest all yielded to its power, and fell into a state of universal disobedience to the Deity, and fierce strife with one another.. Boora immediately deified the sinless few without their suffering death, saying to them—"Become ye gods, living for ever and seeing my face when ye will, and have power over man, who is no longer my immediate care." Upon the corrupted mass of mankind, Boora Pennu inflicted high moral penalties; and let loose the myriad forms of physical evil by the withdrawal of the antidotes which had arrested them. He entirely withdrew his face and his immediate guardianship from mankind. He made all who had fallen subject to death; and he farther ordained that, in future, every one who should commit sin, should suffer death as its consequence. Universal discord and war prevailed, so that all social and even family ties were broken up. All nature became thoroughly tainted and disordered. The seasons no longer held their regular course; the earth ceased to bear spontaneously

fruit fit for the food of man, and became a wilderness of jungle, rocks, and mud. Diseases and death came upon all creatures; snakes became venomous; many flowers and fruits grew poisonous; and many animals became savage and destructive. Man now went clothed, lost the power of moving through the air and the sea, and sank into a state of abject suffering and degradation. Thus the elements of good and evil were thoroughly commingled in man, and throughout nature. Meanwhile, Boora and Tari contended for superiority in fierce conflict; their terrible strife raging throughout the earth, the sea, and the sky; their chief weapons being mountains, meteors, and whirlwinds.*

Up to this point, the Khonds hold the same general belief; but from it, they divide into two sects directly opposed upon the great question of the issue of the contest between Boora and his rebel consort, involving the whole subject of the practical relation between the two antagonist powers with reference to man, the source and subject of their strife.

The sect of Boora believe that he proved triumphant in the contest, and, as an abiding sign of the discomfiture of Tari, imposed the cares of childbirth upon her sex. Her rebellious will, however, her activity as the source of evil, and her malignant hostility towards man, remain unabated, and are ever struggling to break forth; but she is so completely subjected to control, that she is employed as the instrument of Boora's moral rule, being permitted to strike only where he, as the omnipotent ruler of the universe, desires to punish.

The sect of Tari hold, upon the other hand, that she remained unconquered, and still maintains the struggle with various success. They fully recognise the general supremacy of Boora as the creator of the world, and the sole *source* of good, invoking him first on every occasion; but they hold that his power, exerted both directly and through the agency of the inferior gods, is insufficient for the effectual protection of men when Tari resolves to inflict injury or destruction; and, moreover, while they regard Tari as the original *source* of evil alone, they nevertheless believe that she has practically power to confer every form of earthly benefit, both by abstaining from the prevention of the good which flows from Boora, and by directly bestowing blessings.

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* The comet of 184 was watched by the Khonds with the most intense interest—each of the opposite parties regarding it as a new and prodigious weapon in the hand of that deity to which their own worship was chiefly paid.

Doctrines of the sect of Boora. The three classes of Inferior Gods. Ideas respecting the Soul. The Judgment of the Dead.

Boora Pennu, say his sect, resolved that, for his own honour, his work should not be lost, but that man should be enabled to attain to a state of moderate enjoyment upon earth, and to rise after death, through the practice of virtue, to a state of beatitude and partial restoration to communion with his maker. To accomplish these purposes, Boora created a subordinate divine agency, in addition to that of the first sinless men who, when deified, were made guardians of man; and he appointed all the inferior gods to carry out the first object, one excepted, to whom was assigned the duty of administering justice to the dead. It was the office of all these gods to regulate the powers of nature for the use of man, to instruct him in the arts necessary to life, and to protect him against every form of evil. It was ordained, however, that men should obtain earthly blessings, in dispensing which the inferior gods are vested with a large discretion, only through seeking their favour by worship with the offerings which they desire, and which are their food; while it was specially provided that, as a standing acknowledgment that worship is due of right to Boora and Tari alone, and is paid to the lower gods only with their express sanction, the names of the two great divinities should be first invoked at every ceremonial.

The inferior gods are divisible into two classes, distinguished by their origin, their attributes, and the scope of their duties and authority.

The gods of the first class sprang from Boora and Tari. They are unchangeable and not subject to dissolution, and have a general jurisdiction, while the offices of all save the Judge of the Dead, correspond exactly to the primary wants of mankind under their new lot. The first necessity of that lot was, that man should live by labour upon the soil; and, accordingly, the duty assigned to the three first deities is, to teach the art of agriculture, and to regulate the functions of nature necessary to its practice. It is the office of the first of these gods to send rain; of the second, to give new vegetation and the first-fruits; of the third, to give the increase, and to send gain in every shape. These deities delivered from Boora to man the seeds of all useful plants, taught him to clear the jungle, to make ploughs, to yoke oxen, to know the seasons, and to suit the seeds to various soils. It was necessary also, that man should subsist in part by the chace, and a god was

provided to instruct him in the arts connected with the pursuit of game, and to lay down rules for its practice. The next condition of man's new lot was, that he should live in a state of constant strife; and a God of War was accordingly provided to teach the art of war, and to prescribe the laws for carrying it on and for making peace. The establishment of boundaries was necessarily a primary want of a population composed of hostile tribes subsisting by agriculture and the chace; and to meet it, a God of Boundaries was created.*

These six deities, then, were created to meet the primary wants of man on earth after the introduction of evil, namely:—

1. Pidzu Pennu—The God of Rain.
2. Boorbi Pennu—The Goddess of New Vegetation and First Fruits.
3. Pitterri Pennu—The God of Increase, and of gain in every shape.
4. Klambo Pennu—The God of the Chace.
5. Loha Pennu—The God of War (literally the Iron God).
6. Sundi Pennu—The God of Boundaries.

To which is to be added, as an inferior god of the first class:—7. Dinga Pennu—The Judge of the Dead; who will be described hereafter.

The titles of these gods vary in different localities; and between the three who preside over the functions of nature, there is a partial community and interchange of functions. They are invoked next after Boora and Tari at every ceremonial.

Next in rank to this class of inferior gods is the class of deified sinless men of the first age. They are the tutelary gods of tribes and branches of tribes. Like the first class of gods, they are unchangeable and immortal; but they have only a local, or rather tribal jurisdiction. Their aid is supplicated when any common danger threatens a tribe; and they are invoked at every ceremonial after the inferior gods of the first class.

The third class of inferior deities are sprung from the gods

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* In some parts of the country the God of Boundaries is placed first in the class of minor local deities.

of the first two classes. They are the strictly minor and local deities of the Khonds. They are the tutelary gods of every spot on earth, having power over the functions of nature which operate there, and over everything relating to human life in it. Their number is unlimited. They fill all nature, in which no power or object, from the sea to the clods of the field, is without its deity. They are the guardians of hills, groves, streams, fountains, paths, and hamlets, and are cognizant of every human action, want and interest, in the locality where they preside.

The following are the chief of this class of gods:—

1. Nadzu Pennu—The Village God.
2. Soro Pennu—The Hill God.
3. Jori Pennu—The God of Streams.
4. Idzu Pennu—The Family or House God.
5. Moonda Pennu—The Tank God.
6. Sooga Pennu—The God of Fountains.
7. Gossa Pennu—The Forest God.
8. Kootti Pennu—The God of Ravines.
9. Bhora Pennu—The God of New Fruits, produced on trees or shrubs.

Such is the subordinate divine agency to which the care of man's temporal interests was entrusted.

Before describing the office and attributes of the god to whom the determination of the destiny of men after death was committed—The God of Justice to the Dead—it seems necessary to state the ideas of the Khonds respecting the constitution of the soul of man. Men are endowed with four souls. First, there is a soul which is capable of beatification and restoration to communion with Boora. Secondly, there is a soul which is attached to some tribe upon earth and re-born for ever in that tribe, so that, upon the birth of every child, the priest declares, after enquiry, which of the members of the tribe has returned. Thirdly, there is a soul which endures the sufferings inflicted as the punishment of sin, and performs the transmigrations imposed on that account. This soul, moreover, has the power of temporarily quitting the body at the will of a god, leaving it weakened, languid, sleepy, and out of order. Thus, when a man becomes a priest, this soul always leaves his body for a time, to hold an interview with and receive instructions from the god who has appointed him his minister; and when, by the aid of a

god, a man becomes a tiger (a subject afterwards adverted to), this, I believe, is the soul which animates the bestial form. Fourthly, there is a soul which dies on the dissolution of the body.

Dinga Pennu, a name of unknown meaning, is the Judge of the Dead. Like the other inferior gods of the first class, he is sprung from Boora and Tari, is unchangeable and immortal, and has general jurisdiction.

Dinga Pennu resides upon a great rock, or mountain, called Grippa Valli, or the Leaping Rock, in the region beyond the sea, from which the sun rises. The Leaping Rock is perfectly smooth, and exceedingly slippery, "like a floor covered with mustard seed," and a black unfathomable river flows around it. To it the souls of men speed straight after death, and it derives its name from the desperate leaps which they are compelled to make to reach and secure a footing upon its surface, which they constantly fail to do, and so break limbs or knock out eyes, contracting deformities which they generally communicate to the next bodies they animate. Upon that rock sits Dinga, engaged day and night in writing on it a history of every man's actions towards gods and towards men, during every life passed upon earth; in receiving the souls of the dead; registering their coming; casting up each man's account of good and evil; passing sentence according to desert, and dispatching the shades by troops to fulfil his perfectly just and inflexible awards. The plan of retributive justice which Dinga administers is, in a word, this. If he judges that a soul has acquired by virtuous conduct a claim to beatification, he permits it at once to pass among the blessed spirits; but if, on the other hand, he judges that it has failed to establish that claim, he recommits it to earth for farther probation, after such detention in Grippa Valli as he thinks proper to inflict; sending the soul to be reborn in the tribe to which it belongs, and to suffer in a new life penalties proportioned to its guilt.

The punishments which Dinga Pennu inflicts on souls released from suspense in Grippa Valli include every species of earthly suffering, bodily and mental. Of these penalties it may be observed, that, amongst diseases, epilepsy is the most dreaded;—that poverty is peculiarly feared by a people among whom reduction to dependence involves the loss of many social rights and honours, even tainting the blood so as to exclude descendants from succeeding to the office of chief;—that the

want or the death of male offspring is regarded as a punishment of the heaviest kind; and that the being born with a bodily defect is a calamity exceedingly felt by people whose first prayer for their offspring is that they may be brave and beautiful. But no punishment is considered so terrible as the curse of base moral qualities, such as cowardice or falsehood, which bring public infamy upon their possessor and his tribe.

From the following catalogue of Khond virtues and vices, the general spirit of the justice administered by the Judge of the Dead may be inferred.

The chief sins are—

1. To refuse hospitality, or to abandon a guest.
2. To break an oath or promise, or to deny a gift.
3. To speak falsely, except to save a guest.
4. To break a solemn pledge of friendship.
5. To break an old law or custom.
6. To commit incest.
7. To contract debts, the payment of which is ruinous to a man's tribe, which is responsible for the engagements of all its members.
8. To skulk in time of war.
9. To betray a public secret.

Whoever commits any of these sins will be born again afflicted with disease, with poverty, and probably with mental qualities which will make him infamous.

The chief virtues, on the other hand, are the opposites of these sins, and amongst them are besides:—

1. To kill a foe in public battle.
2. To fall in public battle.
3. To be a priest.

And, amongst the sacrificing tribes, 4. To be a victim to the Earth Goddess.

To the soul of any one who shall observe strictly any one of the great virtues, while he shall not be guilty of any one of the great sins, it is considered that the Judge of the Dead will award a place amongst the beatified.

The beatified souls of men enjoy immediate communion with all the gods; they are in rank little inferior to the minor gods, live with them, and much after their fashion. Every tribe invokes the souls of deceased ancestors in endless array at every ceremonial, after invoking the minor gods; and they especially

remember those of men renowned for good or great actions, as for reclaiming waste lands, for extraordinary bravery, for wisdom in council, or for remarkable integrity of life. They believe that beatified souls, although wholly without power, may act as intercessors with some of the gods, as with Dinga Pennu, on the one point of inducing him to restore lost relatives speedily to their homes.

Such are the chief doctrines which are held by the sect which worship Boora Pennu in chief—and are shared, with differences which will be explained, by the followers of Tari. Boora is worshipped, with the ceremonies which will be detailed hereafter, at social festivals held periodically by tribes, branches of tribes, and villages; his followers, while they assign to him the highest precedence as the omnipotent god, never failing to invoke Tari with deep awe and reverence as the second power.

Doctrines of the sect of Tari. Origin of Human Sacrifice.

The sect of Tari share, generally, all the doctrines of that of Boora respecting his purpose of providing a partial remedy for the consequences of the introduction of evil, and the creation of an inferior divine agency to effect that purpose. But, whereas the sect of Boora conceive that he perfectly accomplished his intentions, that of Tari hold that her opposition prevented his doing so with respect to the earthly lot of man, while, however, they believe that he carried out his purpose respecting the destiny of his soul after death.

The sect of Tari ascribe to her, exactly as that of Boora do to him, the elevation of man from the state of barbarous degradation into which he fell upon the introduction of evil, by making the disordered earth fit for cultivation, and by teaching the arts of agriculture, the chace, and war; conceiving that she did this through revelations made to mankind directly by herself under a feminine form called Umbally Bylee, and through her priests, while she also permitted men, at her will, to receive instruction and every other form of good which constantly flows from Boora through the inferior gods; and hence, her sect worship all those gods with the ceremonies they require, exactly as that of Boora do, but, with the difference of view and feeling necessarily arising from their opposite opinions on the point of the relative power of the two chief deities. Lastly, the sect of Tari believe that she gave those blessings to mankind, and continues to permit

their enjoyment, on the express condition of receiving worship with human sacrifices, which are her food.

A legend, which will be found at length in the description of that worship, gives this account of its origin and of the first benefits that followed upon it. The earth was in a state of soft barren mud, utterly unfit for the use of man. Umbally Bylee, the name of the feminine form which Tari always assumed when she communicated with men, appeared cutting vegetables with a hook. She cut her finger, and as the blood drops fell upon the earth, it became dry and firm. Umbally Bylee said, "Behold the good change! cut up my body to complete it." The Khonds declined to do so, apparently believing that Umbally Bylee was one of themselves, and resolving that they would not sacrifice one another, lest their race should become extinct, but would obtain victims by purchase from other peoples. They procured and offered a sacrifice, and, says the legend, "now society with its relations of father and mother, and wife and child, and the ties between ruler and subject, arose;" and the knowledge of all that relates to agriculture was imparted to men.

"Then also," says the legend, "hunting began. A man brought," (apparently to a priest,) "a rat, a snake, and a lizard, and enquired if they were fit to eat. Tari rested on the priest and said to him, 'Give names to all the wild animals, distinguishing those that are fit and those that are unfit for use, and let men go to the jungles and the hills, and kill the sambur* and all other game with arrows and with poison." And men went to hunt. In like manner, a legend, given at length in the worship of the God of War by the sect of Tari, narrates how she taught men the art of fighting. "Boora Pennu, in the beginning," it is said, "created the world and all that it contains, including the iron of weapons, but men did not know the use of weapons, fighting in womanish fashion, and wounding one another with sword grass and spear grass, unable to inflict death." It then tells how Tari taught men to make bows and arrows and axes; and how, "so cruel" was the iron in which "the terrible goddess," when she introduced cruelty with other evils into the world, "had mingled no drop of pity," that none who were wounded lived; but Tari, on the prayer of her children, taught men how to moderate the "cruelty of the first iron," and how to make war.

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* A species of deer.

Thus, say the sect of Tari, did men rise from a state of degradation, and obtain all the benefits they enjoy, through worshipping Tari, at her express invitation and command, with human sacrifices, upon her demonstrating the efficacy of the pouring out of human blood upon the earth. And they believe that the rite and its virtue were afterwards enlarged by a new revelation and decree. Men complained to Tari that the benefits she bestowed on them were insufficient, that there was "little wealth, much fear, but few children, deadly snakes and tigers, and thorns piercing the feet;" whereupon, she expressly prescribed the extension of her ritual, with new ceremonies and new arrangements for the provision of victims, and ordained that its efficacy, which was previously limited to those who practised it, should thenceforth embrace all mankind. And from that time, the sect of Tari believe that the responsibility for the well-being of the whole world has rested upon them.

Thus, while they admit the theoretical supremacy of Boora, her sect make Tari practically the chief object of their adoration, and believe themselves to enjoy her special favour. She is worshipped, like Boora, at great social festivals held periodically by Tribes, branches of Tribes, and villages, while individuals also frequently propitiate her with her great offering.

On the other hand, the opinions and feelings of the sect of Boora on the subject of human sacrifice are exceedingly strong, and always expressed with great warmth and force. They regard it with the utmost abhorrence as the consummation of human guilt; and believe it to have been adopted under monstrous delusions devised by Tari, as the mother of falsehood, with a view solely to the final destruction of her followers. From the legends which will be given at length in describing the worship of Boora, it appears that they believe that Tari was enabled to induce a portion of mankind to adopt the rite only through addressing to them a series of temptations and threats; whilst the remaining portion were preserved from the great sin through special interpositions by Boora.

One legend narrates, that Umbally Bylee appeared in the form of a tiger amongst certain tribes which were at war in the time before the arts of taking life and of public battle were known. She first killed game daily, to the delight of all who partook of it. She then offered to one of the parties to kill any one of their enemies they should designate, and having killed him, all regarded her with unlimited faith, and prayed her to teach them

the art of assuming the forms of beasts (called the art of Mleepa) and the art of killing in war. She consented, and taught the art of Mleepa to a few persons, upon the condition that they, in return, would do one thing which she should require. This proved to be—that they should worship her with human sacrifices, the Goddess threatening instant destruction if they hesitated. They brought out a man for sacrifice; but Boora interposed—as narrated in the legend, and then taught to men both the art of Mleepa and that of war.

On another occasion, Umbally Bylee tempted men to offer the desired sacrifice, by promising to convert the waste and barren earth into cultivated plains covered with population and wealth, —"there being no higher temptation to hold out." They yielded, and a human victim was prepared, when Boora again interfered, routing Umbally and her crew.

Tari afterwards made a way through the mountains for the waters of a lake, and said, "Behold the power of my divinity! Worship me with the blood I require." Boora now left men to take their course, and a human victim was sacrificed; and thus, say his sect, did the sect of worshippers of Tari with human blood arise.

General characteristics of the Khond Divinities.—Legends.

The gods of the Khonds have bodies of human form but of ethereal texture. In size, they are generally superhuman, of various colours, and variously attired and equipped after the fashion of men; and the higher are generally larger in stature than the lower gods. They can assume any form at pleasure. They all, with the exception of Boora, Tari, and Dinga Pennu, live exclusively upon the earth, moving at the height of about two cubits above its surface, invisibly to human eyes, but seen by the lower animals. They all have human feelings, passions, and affections; quarrel, and are reconciled; fall in love, marry, and have children; while the minor gods, at least, grow old, and are subject to sickness, and even to a species of dissolution, which a god of superior strength can inflict, and which differs from the death of men in this, that a god on dying is instantly re-born as a child, without loss of consciousness or recollection. The gods live upon flavours and essences drawn from the offerings of their votaries, from the flesh of animals which they kill, generally by disease, for their food, and from corn,

the abstraction of which is notified by empty ears in the field, or by a deficiency in the garner. All the gods worship Boora and Tari; and those of each grade worship those above them with supplications, and with offerings of the lives of victims and the essences of other oblations. They take from men the materials for such offerings; and the demand on this score is such that the priest has often to reply to enquiries respecting the cause of death of a favourite bullock or pig, that some god or beatified soul required it for a sacrifice to Boora Pennu.

A couple of legends, selected from the endless number current in the country, will give some idea of the mode of life of the gods.

A lofty hill, called Bogah-Soro, is a kind of local Olympus on which the gods of a large district hold their councils. The God of the hill, named Bogah Pennu, had, long ago, a son of strange habits and wayward and sullen mood, who lived entirely apart from his family, and cared for nothing but two pet animals — a horse and an elephant, upon which he lavished his affections, never quitting them day or night, and himself providing for all their wants. The God of the Hill was in despair at the unnatural fancies of his son. He one day managed to persuade him to leave his favourite creatures, in order to carry an invitation to a sister married to a neighbouring god some forty miles off, and, during his absence, transformed the horse and the elephant into two rocks, which are still to be seen on the broad flank of Bogah-Soro. The youth, on returning home, hastened straight to his beloved animals, and, when he discovered the metamorphosis, fell into a paroxysm of grief and rage. When, on demanding who had played him the trick, he learned that it was his father, he rushed into his presence frantic with sorrow and indignation, solemnly renounced his family, and prepared to depart for ever. His father, at length, with infinite difficulty, contrived to pacify him and prevent the execution of his threat, by the solemn promise that he would give him the first horse and elephant that passed that way. The young god, accordingly, went to the road which winds by the mountain, to watch for travellers; and there he has ever since sat, sometimes on a clump of bamboos, the top of which is seen flattened and depressed by his weight; sometimes upon the branch of an old Uddah tree, which is bent like a chair. In the hope of bringing by that road travellers who might be attended by the desired animals, he has,

moreover, created around the spot he haunts a most inviting shade, and has converted a clump of common wild mango trees into trees bearing fruit of delicious flavour; while upon that road travellers are always safe, both from robbers and wild beasts. A horse and an elephant, however, have never yet appeared in that wild mountain pass; but when the Rajah of Purlah Kimedy, was some years ago, flying through the hills in rebellion, attended by both the animals, and meant to go by it, the presence of the young god was opportunely remembered by the Khonds, and the Rajah was preserved from destruction by changing his route.

By the side of the road from Souradah to Guddapore, under a shady mango tree, is a bright and sparkling fountain which gushes from a basin of golden sand. It is called the "Brazen Fountain," and this is the accepted story of its origin and name.

The daughter of the god of an overhanging hill, one day, when carrying home a brass pitcher of water from a rivulet which runs in the dell close by, chanced to meet the young son of a god of the neighbourhood. A few words of courtesy were first exchanged, and then conversation sprang up between them; when the goddess relieved herself of the weight of her pitcher by setting it down at the foot of the tree. The conversation passed insensibly into lovemaking, which ended, in the old lyrical way, amid the flowered jungle. There the divine pair have ever since dwelt. The brass vessel of water was naturally forgotten, and became the Brazen Fountain.

SECTION II.—THE KHOND WORSHIP.

General views as to Worship.—The Priesthood.

The Khonds use neither temples nor images in their worship. They cannot comprehend, and regard as absurd, the idea of building a house in honour of a deity, or in the expectation that he will be peculiarly present in any place resembling a human habitation. Groves kept sacred from the axe, hoar rocks, the tops of hills, fountains, and the banks of streams, are in their eyes the fittest places for worship. They regard the making, setting up, and worshipping of images of the gods, as the most signal proof of conscious removal to a hopeless distance from communion with them; a confession of utter despair of being permitted to make any direct approach to the deity,—a sense of debarment which they themselves have never felt. The Khonds, however, at one or two places where they are much mixed up with Hindus, preserve with reverence, in a house set apart for the purpose, pieces of stone or iron symbolical of some of their gods.

The Khond priesthood, like every other priesthood, lays claim to divine institution. After the primal intercourse between man and his maker ceased, and the inferior gods were created, these were for a time the only mediators between man and Boora and Tari; but it then became necessary that there should be some men in more intimate communion with the gods, and better instructed in their will and rites than the mass of mankind could be; and, accordingly, each deity appointed a set of ministers for himself, by calling into his presence the third or moveable souls of the persons selected, and instructing them in their duties. The first priests taught to their sons or other pupils the mysteries of the gods they served, and the deities have since kept up their priesthoods by selecting for them either persons so initiated, or others at pleasure. Thus, the priesthood may be assumed by any one who chooses to assert a call to the ministry of any god, such call needing to be authenticated only by the claimant's remaining for a period varying from one night to ten or fourteen days in a languid, dreamy, confused state, the consequence of the

absence of his third soul in the divine presence. And the ministry which may be thus assumed, may, with few exceptions, be laid aside at pleasure.

The Khond priests, or Jannis, affect division into two classes, —one which has given up the world and devotes itself exclusively to religious offices; and one which may still engage in every occupation excepting war. The former class are disposed to hold that they alone are qualified to perform the rites of the greater deities; but the two classes pass insensibly into one another, and many of both are seen who perform every ceremonial, with two exceptions, namely, the rite of human sacrifice—at which a great and fully instructed priest alone can officiate, and the worship of the god of war, which his own priesthood alone can conduct. And this god, it is to be observed, requires that his priests shall serve him only, while all the other deities accept divided service from their ministers.

The great Janni who gives up the world, does so absolutely, and after a somewhat striking fashion. He can possess no property of any kind, nor marry, nor, according to his rules, even look upon a woman; and he must generally appear and act as unlike other men as possible. He must live in a filthy hut, a wonder of abomination. He must not wash but with spittle; nor leave his door, save when sent for; except, perhaps, when he wanders to draw liquor from some neglected palm tree in his neighbourhood, at the foot of which he may be found, if required, lying half drunk. He scarcely ever wears a decent cloth or blanket. He commonly carries in his hand a broken axe or bow, and has an excited, sottish, sleepy look; but his ready wit never fails him in his office. He eats such choice morsels as a piece of the grilled skin and the feet of the sacrificed buffaloes, and the heads of the sacrificed fowls; and when a deer is cut up, he gets for his share, perhaps, half the skin of the head with an ear on, and some of the hairy skimmings of the pot.

The priest who has not given up the world, looks and lives like other men. He has a wife and family and often accumulates wealth. He eats apart from laymen, but may drink with them. The Khond priesthood have no endowments of any kind, nor is their land tilled by public labour. Their only perquisites are some of the offerings, the vessels used at certain ceremonies, and occasional harvest offerings of good will, when the deity whom they serve has proved propitious. They have places at all public and private festivals.

The responsibilities of the public worship are generally thus divided, between the priest and the secular Chief. The Chief, after he and the elders have duly consulted the priest respecting the will of the god, is held exclusively responsible for the due performance of the rites indicated, the test being, their result. The Chief has, accordingly, full dictatorial powers in everything relating to the religious ceremonies. He can order any one to perform any act connected with them, and in case of disobedience, the assembly of elders will inflict the instant penalty of the fine of a goat, a buffalo, or a hog. If any important ceremonial is not followed by the desired result, the disappointed people generally demand of the Chief the cause of failure, and he is without an answer. If he attempts to blame the incompetence of the Janni to divine the will of the deity, it is replied by the tribe, that the Chief is alone responsible for failing to provide a competent priest; while the Janni himself casts back the blame upon the Chief with much effect. He will say, for example, that he is convinced that, at the moment of sacrificing to the God of the Chace, or, as the hunters left the village, the wife or child of the Chief wept—a weakness abhorrent to the hilarious god of hunting when his favour is invoked, or his bands rush joyously to the forest; or he may say he conceives the god necessarily expected a better buffalo than the wretched beast which the Chief provided; or, that he fears the Chief must have grudged even that beast in his heart. If there is to be a compromise, the priest and Chief may declare together that they see no explanation but that some one who assisted at the ceremonial must have been wanting in faith in the gods. The end of such contests, however, very often is, the summary decree of a fine by the assembly, when a party immediately proceeds to seize a beast, pig, or sheep from the Chief's farmyard, to be forthwith eaten at a common feast.

One of the chief offices of a priest is, to discover the cause of sickness, which is held to arise, either from the decree of Dinga, from the especial displeasure of some god, or from the magical arts of an enemy. To ascertain which god is displeased, the enquiring Janni seats himself by the afflicted person and, taking some rice, divides it into small heaps each of which he dedicates to some deity. He then hangs up a sickle balanced by a silk thread, places a few grains of rice upon each end of it, and calls upon all the gods by name. If the sickle is slightly agitated as a name is pronounced, that is an indication that a

god has come and rested upon the heap dedicated to him. The priest, having declared the name of the god, lays down the sickle, and counts the grains in the heap: if the number be odd, the deity is offended; if it be even, he is pleased. In the former case, the priest becomes full of the god, shakes his head wildly with dishevelled hair and pours forth a torrent of incoherent words. The patient humbly enquires the cause of the god's displeasure, learns which of his laws has been broken or rites neglected, and instantly makes the offerings prescribed.

Individuals of the Khond priesthood occasionally possess considerable influence, but its power as a body is certainly by no means great.

The Worship of Boora Pennu, the God of Light, or Bella Pennu, God of the Sun.

The chief worship paid to Boora Pennu by his sect is at his great yearly festival, called "Salo Kallo," from the Khond word "Salo," a cattle pen, and "Kallo," spirituous liquor,—that drunk at this feast being prepared in the cattle pen. This festival, like that of human sacrifice among the worshippers of Tari, is held about the time of the rice harvest, and is celebrated by every Tribe, by each branch of a tribe, and by every village, as a great social rite in which every one takes a part. To the tribal feasts, representatives are sent from every village to that of the Chief of the Tribe. A fully instructed priest alone may conduct the ceremonial, and the festival generally lasts five days. During that period, every one eats freely of fermented rice, called "Kenna," which has a half intoxicating effect; wild dances, accompanied by bursts of stunning music, are kept up day and night; and every kind of unrestrained and licentious enjoyment is indulged in.

The story of the creation of the world and of man is recited, as in the legend already given, and, with it, the narrative of the contest between Boora and his rebel consort; of the acceptance of evil by all mankind save the few who were deified; the fall into a state of brutish degradation, and the creation of the inferior deities. In the worship of Boora Pennu alone of the gods, an offering is not absolutely required, although it is never omitted; and at the Salo Kallo, a hog, considered the most valuable victim, is sacrificed. It is hung up by the hind legs in the cattle-pen selected for the performance of the worship;

and when stabbed in the neck, its blood is scattered widely around. The priest then prays to Boora to confer every kind of benefit, while each individual prays for the good which he especially desires.

Another great festival of Boora Pennu, is called the feast of "Jakri," or the "Dragging." It is held to commemorate the interference of Boora, by the agency of a minor god, who dragged forth a buffalo to be sacrificed instead of a man as an oblation to Tari. The victim at this festival is a bull buffalo which has been consecrated at its birth, and allowed to range at will over all fields and pastures until five or six years old. Upon the day of the ceremonial, several ropes are fastened to its neck and its hind legs, about fifty men seize them and rush about with the animal until it is brought up exhausted to the tree of sacrifice, when the priest declares its submission to be a miracle.

The priest then recites the following legend of the origin of the rite—to understand which it is necessary to observe, that natural tigers are believed by these Khonds to kill game only to benefit men, who generally find it but partially devoured and share it; while the tigers which kill men are either Tari, who has assumed the form of a tiger for purposes of wrath, or men, who, by the aid of a god, have assumed the form of tigers, and are called "Mleepa Tigers."

"The woman, Umbally Bylee, appeared as a tiger, and killed game every other day, and all ate of it. There was at that time a fight between the people of Kotrika and those of Mundika. But it was private strife, carried on in womanish fashion, before the art of taking life and that of public battle were known. Umbally Bylee said, 'I will kill any one of your enemies you please.' They said to her, 'Kill so and so;' and she went as a Mleepa tiger, and killed him. Then the people placed unbounded faith in her, and said to her, 'Teach us this new knowledge, and show us the art of killing.' She replied, 'I will teach you, but thenceforward you must do one thing.' And she accordingly taught the art of Mleepa to a few, so that they practised it; and she then said, 'Now you must worship me by the sacrifice of men, or the earth shall sink beneath your feet, and water shall rise in its place, and I will abandon you.' The earth heaved terribly—as some think, from the wrath of Boora Pennu; some, in obedience to the power of the Earth Goddess. Fear filled the minds of all, and,

as directed, they set up a pole beyond the village, and brought human victims, and all was prepared for the sacrifice. But now the God of Light sent a god bearing a mountain, who straightway buried Umbally Bylee therewith, and dragged forth a buffalo from the jungle and said—'Liberate the man, and sacrifice the buffalo. I will teach you the art of Mleepa in every form.' And he taught that art, and the art of public war."

The priest at the Jakri festival, amongst the numerous recitals in honour of the God of Light, gives this account of another interposition of Boora, by the agency of the deified sinless men, gods of tribes.

"The Earth Goddess, taking on herself the shape of a woman, and calling to herself a number of attendants of a like nature, came to the hill country and said to the people, 'See what hills and waste lands and jungles are here; worship me with human blood, and the whole shall become a cultivated plain, and you shall have vast increase of numbers and of wealth.' She thus tempted the people, there being no greater temptation to hold out. Then the God of Light, beholding her proceedings, sent Mahang Meru and, Kopung Meru, Adi Ponga, and Boru Ponga, Gods of Tribes, to counteract her. We had prepared every thing for the sacrifice of a man, when the agents of Boora wounded with the forked axe two of the attendants of Tari. The woman, Umbally Bylee, seeing the hand of the God of Light, fled instantly with the wounded towards Kourmingia. In that tract there was a great lake, and an island in the midst, where they settled, and there they fed on greens and other mud produce. We followed to attack them, but could not on account of the water, and returned." Then is related the fall into the great sin of human sacrifice—"Now Tari made a way for the waters of the lake through the hills and it became dry; and Tari said to the people, 'See the power of my divinity! worship me with the blood I require;' and the people believed in her power, and performed the required worship, and they became savage like beasts, until by intercourse with us, as in receiving wives, they became civilized."

The priest also generally recites at the feast of "Jakri," as at that of Salo Kallo, the history of the conquest of the Earth Goddess by Boora. He then offers up prayers for every benefit, and finally slaughters the buffalo at the sacrificial tree, while every form of wild festivity,—eating, drinking, frantic dancing, and loud music,—is kept up for at least two days.

At the commencement of the ploughing season, the following worship is performed to Boora. The representative of the first ancestor of the tribe, whether he occupies the position of its actual chief or not, goes out into a field with the priest, who invokes Boora and all the other gods, offers to Boora a fowl with rice and arrack, and utters the following prayer:—

"O, Boora Pennu! and O, Tari Pennu, and all other gods! (naming them). You, O, Boora Pennu! created us, giving us the attribute of hunger; thence corn food was necessary to us, and thence were necessary producing fields. You gave us every seed, and ordered us to use bullocks, and to make ploughs, and to plough. Had we not received this art, we might still indeed have existed upon the natural fruits of the jungle and the plain, but, in our destitution, we could not have performed your worship. Do you, remembering this,—the connexion betwixt our wealth and your honour,—grant the prayers which we now offer. In the morning, we rise before the light to our labour, carrying the seed. Save us from the tiger, and the snake, and from stumbling blocks. Let the seed appear earth to the eating birds, and stones to the eating animals of the earth. Let the grain spring up suddenly like a dry stream that is swelled in a night. Let the earth yield to our ploughshares as wax melts before hot iron. Let the baked clods melt like hailstones. Let our ploughs spring through the furrows with a force like the recoil of a bent tree. Let there be such a return from our seed, that so much shall fall and be neglected in the fields, and so much on the roads in carrying it home, that, when we shall go out next year to sow, the paths and the fields shall look like a young cornfield. From the first times we have lived by your favour. Let us continue to receive it. Remember that the increase of our produce is the increase of your worship, and that its diminution must be the diminution of your rites."

The following story of a religious war undertaken by the sect of Boora against that of Tari, is a specimen of a large class of Khond legends recited at the festivals in honour of Boora.

Long ago, the people of Boora Pennu resolved, for his honour, to make war upon the tribes which worship Tari with human sacrifices. The followers of Boora chose for their enterprise the month of the year in which human victims are chiefly offered, and their army moved into Deegee, in the country of the

people of Tari. Difficulties, however, arose in another quarter, which obliged them first to break up their force, and eventually to postpone their undertaking until the corresponding month of the next year; but they resolved to maintain their ground in Deegee, by leaving there the two great leaders named Dorgoma and Kitchima, with a small party. The tribes which offer human sacrifices then took counsel together, and determined that it was absolutely necessary to destroy that detachment with its leaders; for, said they, "If they shall be permitted to remain, ere the return of the invading army, they will have learned all our secret plans, and become perfectly acquainted with our country." The people of the Earth Goddess accordingly assembled a vast host, every man of which carried a load of ashes, while the women attended with provisions, and they appeared like a swarm of bees upon the hills above the small party of the people of the God of Light. The two leaders of that party then said to their men, "We two are here for the glory of the God of Light, and by the order of the tribes who are parties to this enterprise, and we must live or die. But no such obligation lies upon you. You are at perfect liberty to save your lives." Of their men, a few then returned home, and a part retired to some distance, while the rest declared that they would die with their chiefs. These then prayed thus to their god:—"O, God of Light! You prevailed in the contest with the Earth Goddess,—this is our first ground of hope. Again, when the Earth Goddess and her ministers came to delude us into her worship, you sent the divine four, who drove her from our country; this is our second ground of hope. We have come here to establish your power, and if we shall perish, your authority will be diminished, your past superiority will be forgotten. Oh give us arms!" As they prayed, a great wind rushed from a cavern in the side of the hill called Oldura, and scattered to the four quarters of the earth the ashes which the host of the Earth Goddess had brought to overwhelm the band of Boora Pennu. In evidence of these events, the wind roars from that cavern to this day; while the brave chiefs and the brave men who stood by them, obtained possession of Deegee, and that rich tract is now divided amongst five or six tribes their descendants.

"With respect to the projected invasion,—it was determined by the triumphant people of the God of Light, after mature deliberation, to forego it. It was considered, that no good could possibly arise from attacking the people of the Earth Goddess, for

—they are like the red ants—however much you may cherish them, they will continue to sting you, while, if you kill them, what is gained?"

I may observe here, that the Khond tribes of the sect of Boora Pennu which practise female infanticide, allege his permissive sanction for that custom, given on the last occasion on which he communicated directly with mankind. They say that Boora then said to men—"Behold! from making one feminine being, what have I and the whole world suffered. You are at liberty to bring up only as many women as you can manage."

The Worship of Tari Pennu, or Bera Pennu, the Earth Goddess.

In the worship paid to Tari Pennu by her sect, the chief rite is human sacrifice. It is celebrated as a public oblation by tribes, branches of tribes, or villages, both at social festivals held periodically, and when special occasions demand extraordinary propitiations. And besides these social offerings, the rite is performed by individuals to avert the wrath of Tari from themselves and their families.

The periodical common sacrifices are generally so arranged by tribes and divisions of tribes, that each head of a family is enabled, at least once a year, to procure a shred of flesh for his fields, and usually about the time when his chief crop is laid down. When a tribe is composed of several branches, the victims for the fixed offerings are provided by the branches in turn, their cost being defrayed by contributions borne by each person according to his means. And such contributions are imperative, not only upon members of the tribe, but also upon persons of every race and creed that may be permanently associated with it,—as, through receiving its protection, or by employment in it, or by possessing land within its boundaries, the express tenure of which is the discharge of a share of the public religious burdens.

Special common offerings by a tribe are considered necessary upon the occurrence of an extraordinary number of deaths by disease, or by tigers; or should very many die in childbirth; or should the flocks or herds suffer largely from disease, or from wild beasts; or should the greater crops threaten to fail; while the occurrence of any marked calamity to the families of the chiefs, whose fortunes are regarded as the principal index to the disposition

of Tari towards their tribes, is held to be a token of wrath which cannot be too speedily averted. And, that victims may be readily forthcoming when such special occasions for sacrifice arise, whoever then gives one for public use receives its value, and is, besides, exempted from contribution to the three next public offerings.

Individuals make the great oblation when signal calamities fall upon themselves or their families. Should, for example, a child, when watching his father's flock, be carried off by a tiger, supposed to be Tari, the parents fly to the priest, bring him to their house, dash vessels of water over him, seat him in his wet garments, and set a cup of water before him. Into it he dips his fingers thrice, smells them, sneezes, is filled with the deity, and speaks wildly in her name. Should he then declare that Tari had inflicted the blow, offended by her neglected worship, he will doubtless add that an immediate victim is demanded; and the father of the house will make a vow of sacrifice, to be redeemed, at whatever cost, within the year.

Victims are called "Meriah" by the Oriyas; in the Khond language, "Tokki," or "Keddi." Persons of any race or age, and of either sex, are acceptable victims,—except, I believe, Brahmins who have been invested with the thread, and are thence, perhaps, considered already devoted to the gods.

A victim is acceptable to Tari only if he has been acquired by the Khonds by purchase; or was born a victim,—that is, the son of a victim father; or if he was devoted as a child to the gods, by his father or natural guardian. The principle is, that the victim must be, either naturally or by purchase, the full property of the person who devotes him; and thence, should the full right of that person be interrupted or weakened in any way,—as, for example, by the escape of a victim to an asylum amongst the sect of Boora, or by his being carried off by force, or his being delivered up to a British magistrate,—his acceptableness is at an end, and it cannot be renewed unless full property in him be re-acquired, and he be again dedicated by a Khond.

Victims are generally supplied to the Khonds by men of the two races called "Panwa," or "Dombango," and "Gahinga,"—apparently aborigines like themselves, and attached in small numbers to almost every Khond village, for the discharge of this and other peculiar offices. The Panwas purchase the victims without difficulty, or kidnap them in the low country, from the poorer classes of Hindus, procuring them either to the order of

the Khonds, or on speculation; and they, moreover, constantly sell as victims their own children, and children of whom, as relatives, they are the guardians. Khonds, when in distress, as in times of famine, also frequently sell their children for victims,—considering the beatification of their souls certain, and their death for the benefit of mankind, the most honourable possible. An intelligent witness informed me that he once chanced to see a Panwa load another with execrations and finally spit in his face because he had sold for a victim his own child, whom the former wished to have married. A party of Khonds who saw the proceeding immediately pressed forward to console the seller of the child, saying, "Your child has died that all the world may live, and the Earth Goddess herself will wipe that spittle from your face."

The Meriah is brought blindfolded to the village by the procurer, and is lodged in the house of the mullicko or chief, in fetters if grown up, at liberty if a child. He is regarded during life as a consecrated being, and, if at large, is eagerly welcomed at every threshold. Victims are not unfrequently permitted to attain to years of maturity, and should one then have intercourse with the wife or daughter of a Khond, thankfulness is expressed to the deity for the distinction. To a Meriah youth who has thus grown up, a wife is generally given, herself also usually a victim, and a portion of land and of farm stock is presented with her. The family which springs from their union is held to be born to the condition of the father, and although the sacrifice of lives so bound to existence is often postponed, and sometimes forgone, yet, should propitiations be required not easy to be afforded, the whole household is immolated without hesitation. And when the victim parents of a family who have been spared happen to belong to different tribes, as soon as they cease to have offspring, they are separated and sent to their respective tribes, each accompanied by half of the children.

The escape of victims from their fate is comparatively rare, for several reasons. Except when under distinct apprehensions of death, victims are naturally loath to leave persons who treat them with extreme affection, mingled with deference; moreover, each victim is easily persuaded that where there are so many, and he is so much loved, his turn to die is not at hand. Every victim knows, also, that if he flies and is retaken, he will henceforth be kept in fetters, and will certainly be the first offering; and that his re-capture is exceedingly probable, because, while

every other person must be received as a sacred guest, a victim is necessarily restored to his owner by all the tribes of the sect of the Earth Goddess. It is, besides, assiduously impressed upon and believed by victims, that, should they escape from their proper fate, they must perish miserably by disease; while, at the same time, they are convinced that they will be beatified immediately after death by sacrifice.

When a sacrifice is to be celebrated by a tribe, or a portion of one, the following preliminary observances are gone through. Ten or twelve days before the time appointed for the rite, the victim is devoted by cutting off his hair, which, until then, is kept unshorn. When a village receives notice of the day fixed for the sacrifice, all who intend to take part in it immediately perform the following ceremony, called "Bringa," by which they vow flesh to Tari. All wash their clothes, and go out of the village with the Janni, who invokes all the deities, and thus addresses Tari Pennu:—

"Oh, Tari Pennu! you may have thought that we forgot your commands after sacrificing such a one (naming the last victim), but we forgot you not. We shall now leave our homes in your service, regardless of our enemies, of the good or the ill will of the gods beyond our boundary, of danger from those who by magical arts become Mleepa tigers, and of danger to our women from other men. We shall go forth on your service. Do you save us from suffering evil while engaged in it. We go to perform your rites; and if any thing shall befall us, men will hereafter distrust you, and say, you care not for your votaries. We are not satisfied with our wealth; but what we do possess we owe to you, and for the future, we hope for the fulfilment of our desires. We intend to go on such a day to such a village, to bring human flesh for you. We trust to attain our desires through this service. Forget not the oblation."

No one may be excluded from the festivals of human sacrifice, which are declared to be held "for all mankind." They are generally attended by a large concourse of people of both sexes, and continue for three days, which are passed in the indulgence of every form of wild riot, and generally of gross excess. The first day and night are spent in drunken feasting and frantic dances, under excitement which the goddess is believed to inspire, and which it would be impious to resist. Upon the

second morning, the victim, who has been kept fasting from the preceding evening, is carefully washed, dressed in a new garment, and led forth from the village in solemn procession, with music and dancing. The Meriah grove, a clump of deep and shadowy forest trees, in which the mango, the bur, the dammar, and the peepul generally prevail, usually stands at a short distance from the village by a rivulet which is called the Meriah stream. It is kept sacred from the axe, and is avoided by the Khond as haunted ground. Upon the second day, a post is fixed in the centre of the grove, and in some places between two plants of the sankissar shrub. The victim is seated at the foot of the post, bound back to it by the priest. He is then anointed with oil, ghee, and turmeric, and adorned with flowers; and a species of reverence which it is not easy to distinguish from adoration is paid to him throughout the day. Infinite contention now arises to obtain the slightest relic of his person; a particle of the turmeric paste with which he is smeared, or a drop of his spittle, being esteemed, especially by the women, of sovereign virtue. In some districts, instead of being thus bound in a grove, the victim is exposed in or near the village upon a couch, after being led in procession round the place of sacrifice. And, in some parts of Goomsur where this practice prevails, small rude images of beasts and birds, in clay and wood, are made in great numbers for this festival, and stuck on poles, —a practice, the origin or meaning of which is not at all clear. Upon the third morning, the victim is refreshed with a little milk and palm sago, while the licentious feast which has been carried on with little intermission during the night, is loudly renewed. About noon, the orgies terminate, and the assemblage proceeds with stunning shouts and pealing music to consummate the sacrifice.

As the victim must not suffer bound, nor, on the other hand, make any show of resistance, the bones of his arms, and, if necessary, those of his legs, are sometimes broken; but in every case of which I have heard the details, all such cruelty has been avoided by producing stupefaction with opium.

Instances are related of the escape of the victim at the moment of immolation, from the omission of such precautions. About fifty years ago, a victim who had been permitted to grow up to manhood in the district of Rodungiah, was there led out to sacrifice. The preliminary ceremonies had been gone through, and an intoxicated crowd expected their completion, when the

youth said to the chief, "In suffering this death I become a god, and I do not resist my fate; let me, then, partake with you in the joy of the festival." The chief assented, and the young man called for a bowl and drank, when the crowd contended fiercely for the remains of the liquor which his lips had consecrated. He then danced and sang amidst the throng until the sacrifice could be no longer delayed, when he requested the chief to lend him his axe and his bow, that he might once more join his companions armed like a free man in the dance. He received the weapons, and when the chief was busied with the priest in preparing for the last rite, the youth approached him in the dance and clove his skull. He then dashed across the Salki, a deep and foaming torrent, and fled down the ghaut to the keep of Kuli Bissye, of Goomsur. A furious crowd of worshippers followed and demanded his surrender; but the Bissye contrived to parley with them until he could collect a small party of followers who secretly bore away the fugitive, whose descendants still live.

After the preparations which have been described, the following remarkable invocations, legends, and dialogues are gone through, — the part of the victim in the latter, and occasionally also the parts of the chief and the priest, being sustained, in a semi-dramatic way, by the best impersonators of the characters that may be found. The form of words in this long ritual, as in all other Khond rituals, it need scarcely be repeated, is not fixed, but admits of endless variation. I give the fullest one in my possession, exactly as it was told to me.

The priest, having called upon the Earth Goddess, and upon all the other deities by name, first recites this invocation:—

"O Tari Pennu! when we omitted to gratify you with your desired food, you forgot kindness to us. We possess but little and uncertain wealth. Increase it and we shall be able often to repeat this rite. We do not excuse our fault. Do you forgive it, and prevent it in future by giving us increased wealth. We here present to you your food. Let our houses be so filled with the noise of children that our voices cannot be heard by those without. Let our cattle be so numerous that neither fish, frog, nor worm may live in the drinking ponds beneath their trampling feet. Let our cattle so crowd our pastures that no vacant spot shall be visible to those who look at them from afar. Let our folds be so filled with the soil of our sheep that we may dig in

them as deep as a man's height without meeting a stone. Let our swine so abound that our home fields shall need no ploughs but their rooting snouts. Let our poultry be so numerous as to hide the thatch of our houses. Let the stones at our fountains be worn hollow by the multitude of our brass vessels. Let our children have it but for a tradition that in the days of their forefathers there were tigers and snakes. Let us have but one care, the yearly enlargement of our houses to store our increasing wealth. Then we shall multiply your rites. We know that this is your desire. Give us increase of wealth, and we will give you increase of worship."

Now every man and woman asks for what each wishes. One asks for a good husband, another for a good wife, another that his arrows may be made sure, &c.

Then the Janni says—"Umbally Bylee went to cut vegetables with a hook. She cut her finger. The earth was then soft mud, but when the blood drops fell it became firm. She said, 'Behold the good change! cut up my body to complete it.' The people answered, 'If we spill our own blood we shall have no descendants. We will obtain victims elsewhere. Will not the Dombo and the Gahi sell their children when in distress? and shall we not give our wealth for them?' and they prayed thus:—

"'May the gods send the exhausted Dombo, his feet pierced with thorns, to our door! May the gods give us wealth.'

"Their prayer was answered. They procured and sacrificed a victim. The whole earth became firm, and they obtained increase of wealth. The next year many victims came for sale, and the people thanked the gods, saying—'You have sent us victims, and have given us wealth.' Thenceforward the world has been happy and rich, both in the portion which belongs to the Khonds, and the portion which belongs to Rajahs.

"And society, with its relations of father and mother, and wife and child, and the bonds between ruler and subject arose. And there came into use cows, bullocks, and buffaloes, sheep, and poultry. Then also came into use the trees and the hills, and the pastures and grass, and irrigated and dry fields, and the seeds suitable to the hills and to the vallies, and iron and ploughshares, and arrows and axes, and the juice of the palm tree, and love between the sons and daughters of the people, making new households. In this manner did the necessity for the rite of sacrifice arise.

"Then, also, did hunting begin. A man brought in a rat,

a snake, and a lizard, and enquired if they were fit to eat. Then the Earth Goddess came and rested on the Janni, and said to him, 'Give names to all the wild animals, distinguishing those that are fit and those that are unfit for use, and let men go to the jungles and the hills, and kill the sambur and spotted deer, and all other game, with arrows and with poison.' And men went to hunt.

"While hunting, they one day found the people of Darungabadi and Laddabarri (tribes of the Souradah Zemindary, adjacent to Goomsur, which do not offer human sacrifice) offering sacrifice. Their many curved axes opened the bowels of the victims, which flowed out. They who went to the hunt, said—'This ceremony is ill performed. The goddess will not remain with you.' And the goddess left these awkward sacrificers, and came with our ancestors. These people now cut trees only. The deity preferred the sacrifice at the hands of our forefathers, and thenceforth the whole burden of the worship of the world has lain upon us, and we now discharge it.

"Tari Pennu in this way came with our ancestors. But they at first knew only the form of worship necessary for themselves, not that necessary for the whole world. And there was still much fear; and there were but few children, and there were deadly snakes and tigers, and thorns piercing the feet. They then called upon the Janni, to enquire the will of the goddess, by the suspended sickle. He said, 'We practise the rite as it was first instituted, worshipping the first gods. What fault, what sin is ours?' The goddess replied—'In a certain month wash your garments with ashes, or with stones; make kenna; purchase a child; feed him in every house; pour oil on him and on his garments, and ask for his spittle; take him into the plain, when the Earth Goddess demands him; let the Janni set him up; call all the world; let friendship reign; call upon the names of the first people; cut the victim in pieces; let each man place a shred of the flesh in his fields, in his grain store, and in his yard, and then kill a buffalo for food, and give a feast, with drinking and dancing to all. Then see how many children will be born to you, how much game will be yours, what crops, how few shall die. All things will become right.'

"We obeyed the goddess, and assembled the people. Then the victim child wept, and reviled, and uttered curses. All the people rejoiced, except those with whom the child had dwelt, and the Janni. They were overwhelmed with grief; their sorrows

prevailed entirely over their expectations of benefit, and they did not give either their minds or their faith to the gods. 'The world,' said they, 'rejoices, we are filled with despair;' and they demanded of the deity, 'Why have you instituted this miserable heart-rending rite?' Then the Earth Goddess came again and rested upon the Janni, and said, 'Away with this grief. Your answer is this: when the victim shall weep, say to him,—Blame not us, blame your parents who sold you. What fault is ours? The Earth Goddess demands a sacrifice. It is necessary to the world. The tiger begins to rage, the snake to poison, fevers and every pain afflict the people, shall you alone be exempt from evil? When you shall have given repose to the world, you will become a god, by the will of the gods.'"

Then the Victim answers — "Have you no enemies, no vile and useless child, no debtor to another tribe who compels you for his debts to sell your lands; no coward, who in time of battle skulks with another tribe? Have you none of these to seek out and sacrifice?"

The Janni replies—"We have acted upon quite different views. We did not kidnap you on the road, nor while gathering sticks in the jungle, nor when at play. The souls of those whom you would have us sacrifice, can never become gods. They are only fit to perish by epilepsy, falling in the fire, or by ulcers, or other dread diseases. Such sacrifices would be of no avail. To obtain you, we cleared the hill and the jungle, fearless of the tiger and the snake. We stinted ourselves to fill your parents, and gave them our brass vessels; and they gave you to us as freely as one gives light from a fire. Blame them! Blame them!"

The Victim.—"And did I share the price which my parents received? Did I agree to the sale? You now tell me this. No one remembers his mother's womb; nor the taste of his mother's milk; and I considered you my parents. Where there was delicate food in the village, I was fed. When the child of any one suffered, he grieved; but if I suffered, the whole village grieved. When did you conceive this fraud, this wickedness to destroy me? You, O my father, and you,—and you,—and you, —O my fathers! do not destroy me."

The Mullicko, or Chief of the village in which the victim was kept, or his representative, now says, "This usage is delivered down to us from the first people of the first time. They practised it. The people of the middle time omitted it. The earth

became soft. An order re-established the rite. Oh child, we must destroy you. Forgive us. You will become a god."

The Victim.—"Of this your intention I knew nothing; I thought I was to pass my life with you. I assisted to build houses, and to clear fields for my children. See! there are the palm trees I planted. There is the mowa tree I planted. There is the public building on which I laboured—its palings still white in your sight. I planted the tobacco which you are now eating. Look behind you! The cows and the sheep which I have tended look lovingly at me. All this time you gave me no hint of my intended fate. I toiled with you at every work with my whole mind. Had I known of this doom, I had still toiled, but with different feelings. Let the whole burden of my soul's grief, as I remember the past, lie upon you."

The Chief.—"You are about to become a god. We shall profit by your fate. We cannot argue with you. Do you not recollect that, when your father came to claim your uncompleted price, you snatched up a shining brass vessel; that we said, 'That is your father's,' and you threw it at him, and ran away amongst the sheep? Do you not recollect the day on which we cut your hair, devoting you to sacrifice? And do you not recollect that when many were sick, and the Janni brought the divining sickle, he declared 'The earth demands a victim?'"

Then several persons around say, "I should have told you, and I, and I;" and several give answers such as—"I thought of our hard labour to acquire you, which had been wasted, had you escaped from us;" and,—"You might have known all well."

The Victim.—"It is true I did observe something of this; but your aged mothers, and your wives, and your beautiful children, my brothers and sisters, assured me that you were humane, and would never kill one so useful and so beautiful as I. 'They will rather,' said your mothers and your children, 'remembering your acts and your ways, sell these fields, and these trees, and that tobacco, to procure a substitute.' This I believed, and I was happy and laboured with you."

The Chief.—"We cannot satisfy you. Ask your father, who is present. I satisfied him with my favourite cattle, my valuable brass vessels, and my sheep, and with silken and woollen cloths, and axes. A bow and arrows, not four days old, I gave to his fancy. Your parents, forgetting your beauty, forgetting the pleasure of cherishing you, turned their hearts to my cattle, and my brass vessels, and gave you away. Upbraid *them*. Heap im-

precations upon them. We will curse them with you, imprecating upon them—that all their children may be similarly sacrificed. That they may lose, within the year, the price for which they sold you. That they may have a miserable and forlorn old age, lingering childless and unfed. That when they die in their empty house, there may be no one to inform the village for two days, so that, when they are carried out to be burned, all shall hold their nostrils. That their own souls may afterwards animate victims given to hardhearted men, who will not even answer their death-plaints consolingly. Curse them thus, and we will curse them with you."

The Victim will now turn to the Janni, saying—"And why did you conceal my fate? When I dwelt with the Mullicko, like a flower, were you blind, or dumb, or how were you possessed, that you never said, 'Why do you cherish, so lovingly, this child—this child who must die for the world?' Then had I known my doom and leapt from a precipice and died. Your reason for concealment—living as you do apart from men, is—that you thought of yourself. 'I am great. The whole world attends on my ministrations.' But, world, look upon him! What miscreant eyes! What a villainous head, with hair like a sumbully tree! And see how enraged he is! What a jabber he makes! What a body he has got, starved upon worship which depends upon men's griefs!—A body anointed with spittle for oil! Look, O world. Look, and tell! See, how he comes at me, leaping like a toad!"

The Janni replies—"Child! why speak thus? I am the friend of the gods; the first in their sight. Listen to me. I did not persuade your father or your mother to sell you. I did not desire the Mullickos to sell their fields to acquire your price. Your parents sold you. These Mullickos bought you. They consulted me, enquiring, 'How may this child become blessed?' The hour is not yet over. When it is past, how grateful will you be to me! You, as a god, will gratefully approve and honour me."

The Victim.—"My father begot me; the Mullickos bought me, my life is devoted, and all will profit by my death. But you, O Janni! who make nothing of my sufferings, take to yourself all the virtue of my sacrifice. You shall, however, in no respect profit by it."

The Janni.—"The Deity created the world, and everything that lives; and I am his minister and representative. God made

you, the Mullicko bought you, and I sacrifice you. The virtue of your death is not yours, but mine; but it will be attributed to you through me."

The Victim.—"My curse be upon the man who, while he did not share in my price, is first at my death. Let the world ever be upon one side while he is on the other. Let him, destitute and without stored food, hope to live only through the distresses of others. Let him be the poorest wretch alive. Let his wife and children think him foul. I am dying. I call upon all—upon those who bought me, on those whose food I have eaten, on those who are strangers here, on all who will now share my flesh—let all curse the Janni to the gods!"

The Janni—"Dying creature, do you contend with me? I shall not allow you a place among the gods."

The Victim—"In dying I shall become a god, then will you know whom you serve. Now do your will on me."

The acceptable place of sacrifice is discovered the previous night, by persons who are sent to probe the ground about the village with sticks in the dark, and mark the first deep chink as the spot indicated by the Earth Goddess. There, in the morning, a short post is inserted; around it four larger posts are usually set up, and, in the midst of these the victim is placed. The priest, assisted by the chief and one or two of the elders of the village, now takes the branch of a green tree cleft several feet down the centre. They insert the victim within the rift, fitting it, in some districts to his chest, in others to his throat. Cords are then twisted round the open extremity of the stake which the priest, aided by his assistants, strives with his whole force to close; he then wounds the victim slightly with his axe, when the crowd throws itself upon the sacrifice and strips the flesh from the bones, leaving untouched the head and intestines.

The most careful precautions are taken lest the offering should suffer desecration by the touch or even the near approach of any persons save the worshippers of the Earth Goddess, or by that of any animal. During the night after the sacrifice, strong parties watch over the remains of the victim; and next day, the priest and the Mullickos consume them, together with a whole sheep, on a funeral pile, when the ashes are scattered over the fields, or are laid as paste over the houses and granaries. And then two formalities are observed, which are held indispensable to the virtue of the sacrifice. The first is that of pre-

senting to the father of the victim, or to the person who sold or made him over to the Khonds for sacrifice, or the representative of such person, a bullock, called the "Dhuly," in final satisfaction of all demands. The second formality is the sacrifice of a bullock for a feast, at which the following prayer is offered up.

After invoking all the gods, the priest says:—"O Tari Pennu! You have afflicted us greatly; have brought death to our children and our bullocks, and failure to our corn;—have afflicted us in every way. But we do not complain of this. It is your desire only to compel us to perform your due rites, and then to raise up and enrich us. We were anciently enriched by this rite; all around us are great from it; therefore, by our cattle, our flocks, our pigs, and our grain we procured a victim and offered a sacrifice. Do you now enrich us. Let our herds be so numerous that they cannot be housed; let children so abound that the care of them shall overcome their parents—as shall be seen by their burned hands; let our heads ever strike against brass pots innumerable hanging from our roofs; let the rats form their nests of shreds of scarlet cloth and silk; let all the kites in the country be seen in the trees of our village, from beasts being killed there every day. We are ignorant of what it is good to ask for. You know what is good for us. Give it to us!"

When the victim is cut to pieces, the persons who have been deputed by each village to bring its share of the flesh instantly return home. There the village priest and every one else who has staid at home fast rigidly until their arrival. The bearer of the flesh carries it rolled up in leaves of the googlut tree, and when he approaches the village, lays it out on a cushion formed of a handful of grass, and then deposits it in the place of public meeting, to give assurance to all of its arrival. The fasting heads of families then go with their priest to receive the flesh. He takes and divides it into two portions, and subdivides one of these into as many shares as there are heads of families present. He then says to the Earth Goddess—"O Tari Pennu! our village offered such a person as a sacrifice, and divided the flesh among all the people in honour of the gods. Now, such a village has offered such a one, and has sent us flesh for you. Be not displeased with the quantity, we could only give them as much. If you will give us wealth we will repeat the rite." The Janni then seats himself on the ground, scrapes a hole in it, and taking one of the two portions into which he divided the flesh, places it in

the hole, but with his back turned, and without looking. Then each man adds a little earth to bury it, and the Janni pours water on the spot from a hill gourd. Each head of a house now rolls his shred of flesh in leaves, and all raise a shout of exultation at the work done. Then a wild excited battle takes place with stones and mud, in the course of which a considerable number of heads are broken, and all go to the house in which the young men of the village sleep, and there renew the fight and knock down the whole or part of the house. Finally, each man goes and buries his particle of flesh in his favourite field, placing it in the earth behind his back without looking. And here may be noticed the idea which secures the distribution of the flesh of every victim to the greatest possible extent,—that, instead of advantage arising to any one from the possession of a large share of the flesh, all are benefited by a sacrifice in proportion to the number of shares into which the flesh is subdivided. After burying the flesh, all return home and eat and drink, in some places holding a common feast, while in others each family eats apart. For three days thereafter, no house is swept, and, in one district, strict silence is observed, while fire may not be given, nor wood cut, nor strangers be received. Upon the fourth day, the people re-assemble at the place of sacrifice, slaughter and feast on a buffalo, and leave its inedible portions as a gratification to the spirit of the Meriah.

The ceremonial of human sacrifice is finally completed by the offering of a hog to the Earth Goddess, a year after its performance, by the village which sacrificed. This offering is called the "Valka," and the invocation to Tari is simply this—"O, Tari Pennu, up to this time we have been engaged in your worship, which we commenced a year ago. Now the rites are completed. Let us receive the benefit."

Such are the rites and observances which, in some districts, make up the worship of the Earth Goddess. But they are subject to many variations. Thus, in one tract the victim is put to death slowly by fire. A low stage is formed sloping on either side like a roof; upon it the victim is placed, his limbs wound round with cords, so as to confine but not prevent his struggles. Fires are lighted, and hot brands are applied, so as to make the victim roll alternately up and down the slopes of the stage. He is thus tortured as long as he is capable of moving or uttering cries; it being believed that the favour of the Earth Goddess,

especially in respect of the supply of rain, will be in proportion to the quantity of tears which may be extracted. The victim is next day cut to pieces.

The sect of the Earth Goddess often attempt to introduce secretly fragments of the flesh of human victims into the tracts inhabited by the sect of Boora. One object in so doing is, to excite the wrath of Boora towards his followers for their failure to prevent the pollution; but some of the sect of Tari, at least, hope also, by depositing the flesh at the shrines of some of the local deities, to induce in them a taste for the horrid food, and, by its gratification, to seduce them from their rivals. Whatever may be the true theory, both sects are agreed as to the result effected in the following case. In Cattingia, the people of which are of the sect of Boora, there are spots where certain salts effloresing upon the soil attract the deer and other wild animals in great numbers, so that they become an easy prey to the huntsman. The people of the neighbouring tract of Guddapore, who offer human sacrifices, placed in one of the most valuable of those spots a shred of human flesh for the guardian deity. Since that time, no man of Cattingia has ever seen game there, while no huntsman of Guddapore has ever failed to find it.

The people of Boora Pennu regard with horror the impurity of the country which is polluted with human blood. When they visit it between the seasons of sowing and reaping, they may not use its fire, but must obtain pure fire by friction; nor may they use the waters of its pools or fountains until they have first fixed their arrows in them, symbolizing their conquest. In like manner, they may not sleep in a house until they have snatched and burnt a few straws from its thatch, to symbolise its conquest with conflagration. Death is believed to be often the penalty of the neglect of these precautions.

The worship of the First Class of Inferior Gods.

I shall now describe the worship of the first class of inferior gods sprung from Boora and Tari. Three of these deities preside over the functions of nature and the arts connected with agriculture, the fourth is God of the Chace, the fifth is the God of War, the sixth is the God of Boundaries, the seventh, to whom no worship appears to be addressed, being the Judge of the Dead. The rituals which I give, are generally those of the sect of the Earth Goddess, which differ in no material point, save where distinctive tenets are introduced, from those of the sect of Boora.

Pidzu Pennu, the God of Rain.

Pidzu Pennu, the God of Rain, being necessarily regarded as the great cause of vegetation, his worship is in practice nearly identified with that of Boorbi Pennu, the Goddess of New Vegetation; and his rites are generally, if not always, performed at her shrine, a stone or a tree near every village.

When it is resolved to invoke the God of Rain, the elders, having made their arrangements with the priest, proceed through the village calling out, "Vessels ho! Vessels ho!" when vessels of arrack are immediately brought out from every house. These are carried by parties of ten or twelve to the tree of Boorbi Pennu. Pidzu Pennu then comes upon the Janni, the offerings are deposited under the tree, and all seat themselves. A great Janni, with two smaller priests and some of the principal elders, then perform the following worship apart from the crowd.

The Janni first calls on Boora and Tari, and then on Pidzu Pennu, and on all the other gods,—as Samudur Pennu, the God of the Sea, Loha Pennu, the God of War, and Sundi Pennu, the God of Boundaries,—to make up, as it is considered most important to do, a strong assembly of the peers of Pidzu Pennu, in the hope of their exerting the influence of their opinion upon him. The priest then says—"O, Pidzu Pennu, hear us! When have we come short in our service? In what have we diminished ancient usage? We say not that we have not failed towards you; but if we have failed unconsciously, it was your part to have remembered the constant service of our fathers, and

to have intimated to us our fault, not to have visited us thus in wrath. Behold your peers, Loha Pennu, &c. We have worshipped them even as we have worshipped you. Their favour has not diminished towards us.

"Oh, Pidzu Pennu! is it that you have given your daughter in marriage to the son of some god who is hostile to us, or have made his daughter your son's bride, and under his influence injure us? We men cannot comprehend your divine thoughts. But your fellow gods, Loha Pennu, Pitterri Pennu, Soro Pennu, &c., know them and judge them. We know not, we cannot know your counsels; but we pray you to remember,—to reflect that, if you shall not give us water, half our land must remain unploughed; that the seed in the ground will rot; that we and our children must perish for want of food; that our cattle must die for want of pasture; that the sambur, the spotted deer, the wild hog, and all other game will quit our country, seeking other haunts. We pray of you to remember all this; and that, should you hereafter, when it is too late, relent, either from pity towards us, or from desiring your own food and worship, or from doubting of your reception,—should you, when we are no more, seek the worship of another village,—we pray you to reflect how little any gift of water will then avail, when there shall be left neither man, nor cattle, nor seed. Therefore, we now address to you these entreaties, while we also beseech all of you, ye assembled gods, to aid and enforce our prayer to Pidzu Pennu, taking to your hearts all we have said.

"O Pidzu Pennu! for you we have brought eggs and arrack, and rice and a sheep. Be pleased to eat, and to entertain these assembled gods, receiving from them all the credit due for the goodness of the feast. O give us abundant rain, enough to melt the hill tops. Go and fetch water for us, if need be, by force or fraud, from the stores of your friends the gods of rain. Bring it in brass vessels, and in hollow gourds, and resting on the sky above our land, pour the water down on it through your sieve, until the samber, unable to live in the forests, shall seek shelter in our houses, and till the soil of the mountains shall be washed into our vallies. Strip off all old leaves and bring out new. Let the vegetation be such, that shoots springing from the newly-planted melons shall follow our footsteps, and let it be of such strength that our cooking-pots shall burst next year from the force of the swelling rice. Let the bamboo sprouts shoot out rapidly. Let all the neighbouring tribes come to buy rice of us,

and let them alone experience the pains of surfeit. Let there be such a gathering of the beasts of the chace in our green and favoured country, that our axes shall be blunt with cutting them up. But do you, moreover, recollect that we cannot go out in the falling floods. Then do you don your hat, and, laying your stick over your shoulder, guard our unenclosed fields from both the wild animals and the tame cattle. Let our full fountains gush upwards. Do thus, and we will next year provide eggs, fowls, a sheep, and liquor for a feast at least equal to this, for the maintenance of your character for hospitality with your brother gods."

They then kill the sheep, but may not eat it. Its flesh must be given to Soondies, or Goands, if any be present; if not, it must be left on the field. Those who take part in this ceremony, however, drink the liquor with wild shouts and dancing, and return home. The Janni and a few of the old men remain a little behind, to reply to and pacify any god who may by accident have been forgotten at the bidding of the gods, and may now demand the cause. Having gone a few steps, those elders and the priests turn back and say—"If we have unconsciously omitted to do honour on this occasion to any god, we pray of the other deities to intercede for us and pacify him."

Pitterri Pennu—The God of Increase.

Pitterri Pennu, the God of Increase, and of Gain in every shape, is worshipped at seed time, and his worship is in each village designated from the tree, rock, or other spot where it is performed, as the "Mowa Tree" worship, the "Tank-side" worship.

Upon the first day of the feast, a sort of rude car is made of a basket set upon a few sticks, tied upon bamboo rollers for for wheels. The Janni takes this car first to the house of the lineal head of the tribe or branch, to whom it is essential that precedence should be given in all ceremonies connected with agriculture, and obtains from it a little of each kind of seed and some feathers. He then takes the car to every other house in the village, which contributes the same things, and lastly, it is conducted to a field without the village, accompanied by all the young men who beat each other and strike the air violently with long sticks. The seed which is thus carried out, is called the share of the "evil spirits spoilers of the seed."

These are considered to be driven out with the car; and when it and its contents are abandoned to them, they are held to have no excuse for interfering with the rest of the seed corn.

The next day, the people of each house kill a hog over the seeds for the year, and address the following invocation to the God of Increase.

"O Pitterri Pennu! This seed we shall sow to-morrow. Some of us your suppliants will have a great return, some a small return. Let the least favoured have a full basket, let the most favoured have many baskets. Give not this seed to ant, or rat, or hog. Let the stems which shall spring from it be so stout that the earth shall tremble under them. Let the rain find no hole or outlet whereby to escape from our fields. Make the earth soft like the ashes of cow dung. To him who has no iron wherewith to shoe his plough, make the wood of the doh tree like iron. Provide other food than our seed for the parrot, the crow, and all the fowls and beasts of the jungle. Let not the white ant destroy the roots, nor the wild hog crush the stem to get at the fruit; and make our crops of all kinds have a better flavour than that of those of any other country. We are unskilled in adapting our seeds to different soils; give us wisdom to suit them to each other. Thou art a god created by Boora Pennu. O Pitterri Pennu! if pleased, your bounty is boundless. Be gracious to us."

After this invocation, the elders feast upon the hogs, and the mowa spirit. The young men, however, in revenge for their exclusion from the good cheer, enjoy the privilege of waylaying and pelting them with jungle fruit, when returning from the feast.

Upon the third day, the lineal head of the tribe or branch goes out and sows his seed, when all the rest may do so.

Klambo Pennu, or Pilamu Pennu—The God of the Chace.

The following worship is paid to Klambo Pennu, or Pilamu Pennu, the God of the Chace.

When the huntsmen fail to find game, the Janni is required to ascertain and declare the cause of their ill success, which he may find to be, either, that they have violated some law of the chace, or some of the many rules for dividing and eating the game; or that, as the hunters left the village, some one in

it wept, an act most offensive to the God of the Chace:—from some such cause, he may say that Klambo Pennu, or some other god has ordered the jungle to hide the game; or has made the arrows of the hunter pointless; or has ordered the streams to take away weariness from the pursued game; and he will then direct some rice, an egg, and a fowl to be brought from each house for an offering to be placed on the round stones of Klambo Pennu beside the village,—upon which all game is deposited when brought in, divided into the proper shares, and often also cooked. The offering required by the priest being collected, he thus invokes the god—"O Klambo Pennu! You are our God of the Chace. You gave game to our fathers, and were used also to make our arrows sure, to give force to our axes, and keenness to the mouths of our dogs; while, at your shrine the cooking fire was never extinguished, and the blood never dry. Behold it now! O Klambo Pennu! lay aside your anger. One cannot always stay the tears of children. Who at a feast can restrain a greedy-guts? This you know; and why, therefore, do you record these faults against us upon your knotted string?* We speak thus, but the benefit of the chace is no less yours than ours. Let us again see the sambur, and the spotted deer, and the bison, and the wild hog, and the hare, as we leave our thresholds; and when these animals hear our shout, may their limbs become disobedient, and their hearts panic-struck. Give to our arrows and our axes the poison of the first iron against our game. Make the earth preserve its footmarks. Make a cool wind ever blow from the hill and the forest upon us huntsmen. O Klambo Pennu, make your name great!"

The Janni then rubs an arrow or an axe on the stone of Klambo Pennu; all do the same to their weapons, and they go out and bring home something, if it be but a small bird, from the forest. It is usual, moreover, when a hunting party is formed, to require the priest to propitiate the God of the Chace, by piling the weapons of the huntsmen by a rivulet, sprinkling water over them with a handful of long grass, and sacrificing a fowl; when the god, if propitious, enables him to indicate the direction in which game is to be sought, and occasionally to devote so many head to fall. Klambo punishes

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* The Khonds keep all accounts by knots on strings.

the slightest infraction of the rules he has laid down for the division of game; they are such as—that the head and tail of every animal belong to the person who kills it, those being considered the most delicate portions, which he will desire to present to the old men of his family; and that the under portion of every beast belongs to the person on whose land it falls.

Loha Pennu—The God of War, (literally, God of Iron.)

Every village, or cluster of hamlets, has a grove sacred to the God of War. In it are buried a piece of iron, believed to be a relic of the iron of the time when the Earth Goddess first introduced poison into iron, amongst other evils; and an ancient bow and arrows and a war-drum of iron, or some one of these weapons. They appear a little above the surface of the ground, and are seen to emerge somewhat farther before a battle, subsiding again on its conclusion. The War God presides over contests between different tribes, or between Khonds and foreign enemies, but never over the contests of the people of the same tribe. He becomes highly incensed if war be not forthwith declared when the maintenance of rights requires it, and then shows his wrath by the ravages of tigers and disease. When such signs appear, the elders assemble and deliberate. The history of the past is gone over, with a view to discover the breach of the laws of war which may have offended the god; and if, in the end, it is determined that there shall be war with some "Kassinga," or enemy beyond the tribe; the following ceremonies are gone through:—

The fighting men, having first washed and dressed their hair with the care required by Khond custom, assemble and place their ornaments of war, feathers, skins, cloths, &c., before the God of War, in his grove. The Janni takes a fowl, with some rice, and arrack, and invokes the god, while he also calls upon all the other deities to assemble as witnesses of their proceedings. He then says—"O God of War! we have doubtless omitted to give battle, it may be, through forgetfulness of your laws, or through weakness, or from considering too much the immature age of our youth, or the scantiness of our provisions; but now, from the ravages of tigers, from the fevers, the diseases of the eye, the ulcers, and the pains in every limb, from which we suffer, we

conceive that you indicate to us that you have given us sufficient strength, provisions, and wisdom for war. We bring to you our weapons. You have made them strong, now make them keen. We go out to fight our enemies. Send home the erring shaft. Send our stones straight to the mark. Let our axes crush cloth and bone, as the jaws of the hyena crush its prey. Make the wounds we give to gape. Let our little men slay big men. When the wounds of our enemies heal, let lameness remain. Let their stones and arrows fall on us as softly as the flowers of the mowa tree fall in the wind. Let our wounds heal as quickly as the blood drops from them dry upon the ground. Make the weapons of our enemies brittle as the long pods of the karta tree. You are our War God, do you thus aid with your strength us and our allies (whom they name). May the weapons of all of us when we return from the fight be changed in hue. May our women be proud and happy to serve food in battle to brave men like us, so that when other tribes shall hear of their happiness and pride, they shall desire to unite their women to us. May we plunder in victory the villages of our foes of bullocks, and tobacco, and brass vessels, which our women may bear proudly as presents to their parents. O Loha Pennu! we worship you with fowls, and sheep, and hogs, and buffaloes. We only ask for the aid you gave to our fathers in past fights (naming them), and no new thing. We are their children."

Then all snatch up their arms, when the priest commands silence, and recites the following myth and invocation, the former containing many of the distinctive doctrines of the sect of Tari.

"In the first time, when the God of Light created the hills, and the woods, and the streams great and small, and the plains, and the rocks, and boundaries, and the tame animals, and the game of the forests, and man,—then too he made the iron of these weapons, but the hands of our forefathers did not know how to use them.

"There was a mother, Umbally Bylee, with two children, Allonguarra, and Patanguarra, warriors. They came to her one day, all wounded, and with bleeding breasts. She said, 'What has befallen you?' They answered, 'We have been fighting outside people with sword grass.' Their mother cured their wounds, and said, 'That is an improper way of fighting, do not fight so again.' A few days after, the children came again, covered with burs, or spikes of grass, as sheep are covered with wool,

and said, 'We have fought the outside people with bur (or spear) grass.' Their mother cured them, and said, 'This mode of fighting is improper. Bring the iron of the Hindu country, and make blades for axes and for arrows, and take the damun tree for axe handles, and make bows of the thornless bamboo, and wind skins and cloth round the body, and adorn the head with feathers, and go forth to fight. Then shall you become awakened and improved, and cloth, and salt, and sugar will come to you, and you will see men of different nations and different minds.' And they made arrows of this form,* and went out to battle, and on both sides very many fell. Then the children came and said to their mother, 'O mother! we have obeyed your orders, and very many have died—none of the wounded have lived! We cannot endure the deadly keenness of this iron.' She answered 'My child, it is not the fault of the weapons that all whom they wound die. The destructive (or terrible) goddess, who made the iron what it is, mingled in its composition no drop of pity. Heat the iron in the fire, and beat it.' They did so, and it became changed, and it slew only those who were ready to die. The mother then said, 'Make your arrows henceforth in another form. This arrow, with whatever skill you may shoot, will slay those only who are ready to die.' And this form has remained, and to this day it has defended every man's boundaries, and property, and rights.

"O God of War! now give to our arms the qualities of the first merciless iron. Then shall we be rich in every form of wealth, and we will pay to you the richest worship."

The priest then cries—"Now arm and march!" He accompanies the host to the enemies' boundary, over which an arrow is shot from the bundle of some one indicated by the divining sickle, and then a branch of a tree is cut and carried off from the enemies' land.

The host next go to the village within whose boundary the shrine of the War God is situated; and the village chief dresses the branch in clothes and armour, sets it up to personate one of the enemy, I believe, and calls upon the God of Light, and all the other gods, saying—"Bear witness, that in all these proceedings we have conformed to the rules of the God of War; that victory is therefore now due to us, and that our sufferings from tigers, from fevers, and from every pain, ought to cease;"

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* A drawing would be necessary to explain the difference between the two forms of arrow-heads.

when all shout and say—"To suffer death we do not object, but, O gods! let us not be *mutilated* in battle. We are the children of such and such great ancestors (naming them). Ye gods, raise our name by giving us victory!" They then take the dressed-up branch and throw it down at the shrine of the God of War; and it is to be observed, that they must give their enemies full time to complete similar rites before they attack them.

The following worship is paid to the God of War, when peace is made.

When parties are tired of a contest and wish for peace, they make known their desire to some friendly tribe who send three or four old men to act as mediators. These first visit one of the parties and ascertain its feelings, and then proceed to the other, to persuade them to peace. These generally reply in this strain—"Peace and war are not in our hands, but in the hands of the god, and if he requires war, the arrows will fly of their own accord from our bows." The mediators reply that this is true, but pray of them, if the arrows shall not so fly, that they will put all hostility out of their minds, and worship the gods; and they add a proposal to ascertain the will of these in their presence. The mediators farther persuade them to send word to their enemies that they are going to make that enquiry, and that they propose they should do the same, each side sending two old men to witness the ceremony, and observe the minds of their opponents.

In the first place, a basket of rice is set out in the house of the Janni, or of the Chief, and the iron arrow of the God of War is placed upright in it. If it remains erect, the war must proceed; if it falls, as it is very apt to do, the peace worship may proceed. In this case, the whole population go out into the plain, with the priest carrying some rice and two eggs. He calls upon Loha Pennu and invokes the presence of all the other gods, and says—"O Loha Pennu! you aided us in this fight to prevent our dishonour, or because your will was war, or that our enemies might not rise upon our heads; or you engaged us in this war to prevent us from being occupied with the service of pernicious gods; or your reason is one proceeding from your divine mind which is hid from us; or perhaps you preferred that we should die by war rather than in any other way; or it may be, that the smiths, the weavers, and the distillers solicited you apart for their benefit, that there should be war; or it may have been that you

were angry that our arms hung rusty in our houses; or it may be that the jungle yams complained that they were being extirpated in the forests, where all penetrate fearlessly in time of peace? or did the honey-bees complain that they had no life from persecution in the leisure of the long peace? or the bullocks that they were dying beneath the yoke in clearing new land? or did the beasts and birds of the forest complain that they were suffering extirpation? or is it that the paths to our friends' houses are worn into stream beds by the feet of passers to and fro, and that they prayed for war? or is it your reason, that there have been breaches of solemn engagements? From whatsoever cause, and through whomsoever,—whether smith, honey-bee, breach of engagement, &c., this war arose, all now seek peace. This is the disposition of our minds. Do you make plain to us the meaning of the signs of your will."

They now fill a dish with hog's fat, and stick a cotton wick in it. If the flame burns straight, it is for war; if not, for peace. They now also turn upside down the earthen vessel used in worship, put some rice upon the bottom of it, try if an egg will stand in the rice, and say—"O God of War explain these signs! but if they are for peace, do not thereupon become inattentive! Give us full strength to the very end, until we and our enemies, to the last man, have laid down our arms; and do you support us in future through all generations, as you do now. If we shall have peace now, we will provide liberally for your worship, and increase your service. We your servants pray you to make the minds of all consent to this peace. Do you ascertain distinctly the minds of our enemies, and of their gods, and act accordingly. And let there be perfect harmony in our hearts and may our feet raise such a cloud of dust in the peace dance, that it shall not settle in three days, even though the skies should flood the earth. O Loha Pennu! upon that day; let there be no rain, and no trouble in childbirth."

No new answer is required from the god, but the negotiations proceed through a long course until both hosts join in the peace dance, which rages for three or four hours. All are frantic with excitement, conceiving it to be inspired by the god, and that it would be impious to resist it. The joy of the peace dance is regarded as the very highest attainable on earth; and the exhaustion which follows it is considered to demand fifteen days' repose.

The following is the conclusion of the ceremonial of peace-making as it was performed by the tribes of Darungabadi and

Grundabadi, in 1845, after a long period of destructive war. These tribes are of the sect of Boora, and it will be observed that they expressly ascribe to him the introduction of the sanctions of peace.

The Janni having prepared a mixture of water and the earth of a white ants' hill, said—"Let the warriors of both sides attend. Let the assembled multitudes listen. The beginning of our feud was this. Loha Pennu said to himself, 'Let there be war;' and he forthwith entered into all weapons, so that from instruments of peace they became weapons of war; he gave edge to the axe, and point to the arrow; he entered into all kinds of food and drink, so that men in eating and drinking were filled with rage, and women became instruments of discord instead of soothers of anger. Our abundance of the blessings of peace was given to others, and the means of war alone abounded with us. We forsook love and friendship, and were filled with enmities. So great wars arose. Loha Pennu being satisfied with bloodshed, weapons having become blunt with slaughter, and the earth fat with blood, Boora Pennu wills that the solemn obligations which he appointed in past time to allay the wars and animosities produced by Loha Pennu, shall now be entered into, and I now therefore administer those obligations. Let the sharpness of weapons cease; let the wrath which enters into man with food and drink cease; and let man resume love and friendship. And do thou, O Pitterri Pennu (Goddess of Increase) be gracious to us, and increase and multiply our people, and thou be thou far from us."

The Janni then sprinkled the parties making peace, with water and earth.

Sundi Pennu—The God of Boundaries.

The following is the common strain of invocation addressed to Sundi Pennu:—"Oh Sundi Pennu! keep disease from our boundary, the disease of epilepsy and disease of the eye, of the arms, of the legs. Let not the hostile gods of other countries cross our boundary; nor allow the tigers nor the snakes to cross our limits. Do you attract the water of higher countries to our boundary, and do not let stray our useful animals or our game, but do you let pass easily all noxious beasts. Permit not our tame cattle to pass our boundary, but make them grow large within it like the swelling bitter gourd.

"You were always wont to do us these favours; now, for a small reason, your heart is changed. I your servant pray you to

dismiss that feeling from your breast. I present to you this fowl, this egg, and this arrack. Moreover we pray you to remember, O God of Boundaries, that it is your part to meet and conciliate the hearts of all who approach us. I now go. Do you give a propitious answer, so that henceforth I may have to render you worship in pleasure, not in pain."

The priest then makes the offering of a fowl or a goat at a point upon the boundary, fixed by ancient usage, and generally where a path crosses it.

The God of Boundaries is necessarily considered a deity common to any two parties whose lands may adjoin. When these parties are at war, each invokes the god to bear witness to the justice of its cause, and to favour its arms; and, as both may not propitiate him on the same day, the battle is postponed, if necessary, to enable them to do so upon successive days. This god, in a fight, sends the arrows of their enemies to the hands of the party whom he may favour, closes their wounds that they may not gape fatally, and saves their battle food from being lost in the confusion of the field and from turning sour.

The Worship of the Second and Third Classes of Inferior Deities.

The slight and unfrequent worship of the second class of inferior gods—the deified and sinless men of the first age—appears to require no notice beyond what is given in the statement of the tenets of the Khonds. I proceed to describe the worship paid to the third class of inferior gods—the minor deities who fill nature and preside over the details of human life.

Idzu Pennu—The House God.

Idzu Pennu, or the House God, is the god of every household. He is propitiated by the offering of a hog or a fowl, with rice and arrack, on every occasion of general sacrifice by a tribe or village, and also when the master of the household transacts any private business of importance, as the settlement of a marriage, or any considerable sale of property. The household god, if favourable, increases the grain stored in the garner; and he is specially invoked at all domestic ceremonies, as namings, and at marriages, which every minor deity also is prayed to bless with the benefits

in his especial gift—as the God of Boundaries to take care that the bride passes safely from her father's to her husband's house, and the God of Streams to provide that water may abound at her new home.

To Jori Pennu, the God of Streams, to Soro Pennu, God of Hills, and the other minor local gods, the following is the common style of address, while the offerings are fowls, eggs, rice, and arrack.

"Oh God of Streams! you visit us with evils, withdrawing your favour on account of our sins. We cannot say that we are faultless, but we have been unable to afford to you a large and full supply of food in worship. Were we, O God of Streams, constantly to expend our means upon your rites, and upon those of all the other gods, we should lose our lands; and then, we pray you to consider, where would be your worship? Considering this, we are unable to spend much upon your rites. O receive this apology. We now make small offerings of a fowl or an egg, according to our ability; accept of them graciously. Look with favour upon us, on our wives, and our children, on our cattle, our sheep, our pigs, and their offspring. Do not let them be hurt in going to the water (or to the hill, if the Hill God be addressed). Give us increase of wealth! Accept our worship graciously, and give us your blessing."

Nadzu Pennu,—The Village God.

Nadzu Pennu, the Village God, is the guardian deity of every hamlet. He is the great object of the familiar worship of the Khonds: the prosperity or ruin of villages is in his hands, and his patronage is implored for almost every undertaking. This deity is familiarly approached by all, at his shrine, which is simply a stone placed under the great cotton tree which stands in or near every village. That tree, it may be observed, is planted at the foundation of each village, and is regarded with feelings of veneration which may be best understood from the following ceremony, which takes place amongst the sect of Boora Pennu at the foundation of every village, or upon changing the site of an old one.

On the day fixed for the ceremony, the village Janni brings from the jungle the stem of a young cotton tree, six or eight feet long, having its root and top cut off, but with all its twigs carefully

preserved, and the long sharp thorns, which the young branches of this tree bear but the old ones lose, unbroken. The priest, upon entering the village, says to the young tree, "I bring you, by the order of Boora Pennu, who commanded us to build this village, as did also such and such gods"—naming ten or twelve others. The people of the village are now assembled, with dancing and music and fermented rice, and a hole is dug, in which the tree is planted.

A day or two afterwards, the Janni, having ascertained whether the god requires the sacrifice of a hog or a buffalo, and the animal being duly provided, again meets the assembled villagers by the young tree, when the following rude masque is gone through. An old man of stupid and clownish look, comes out of the village to where the people are assembled, and with a surprised and puzzled air, asks the Janni—"What, I pray you, may be the meaning of the planting of this stick?" The priest replies,—"If you don't know, friend, you must assuredly be a great block,—a mere jungle-stick, yourself. And how, O friend block, may I ask, did you find legs to bring you hither? You must have acquired them in some wonderful way. But since you are come to us, I will enlighten you, and make a man of you. Know, then, that when Boora Pennu first ordained that villages should exist, he gave us the tree which you now see planted, for a model in all these respects. That our families should spread like the branches of this great tree, strongly and widely. That our women should resemble its lovely and glowing red flowers. That, as the birds are attracted by the love of those sweet flowers, so the youths of neighbouring tribes should come, attracted by our young daughters. That, as of the flowers of this tree not one falls barren, but all unblighted bear fruit, so should it be with our women. That our sons should, in their youth, be rough, sharp, and keen like the young branches of this tree which are covered with thorns; but that, as those thorns disappear with age, so should they become smooth and cool when youth is past. And lastly, this tree is given us as an example that we should live as long as it, a most long-lived tree. Boora Pennu thus ordained, and gave us this model tree." The old man then says, "And for what purpose, I pray, is this hog, or buffalo?" The priest replies, "One places things which are of value on a stand. We place flesh upon leaves, rice in vessels of earth or of metal; a man rests upon a couch; and this animal is an offering upon which the

commands of the deity may rest." Then the victim is killed, and some of its dung mixed with straw is put upon the cut top of the tree.

Sugu Pennu, or Sidruyu Pennu—The God of Fountains.

The Gods of Fountains are objects of the most anxious worship. When a spring dries up, the priest is instantly sent for, and implored with the most liberal promises of reward to bring back the water. He first attempts to propitiate and move the God of the Spring; and if he fails to do so, tries the following process. He plucks the cocoon of a wild silkworm from a bamboo tree, and having emptied it, steals in the dead of night to some living fountain, to try by secret invocations to induce its god to transfer a portion of its waters to the deserted spring; and this he does at the imminent risk of his life, if his errand should be discovered by the proprietors of the waters which are to be wiled away. The priest, after muttering for a long time alone over the spring, fills the cocoon shell from it, and returns to the dry fountain repeating prayers as he goes, which, if favourably heard, will make a stream of water follow his footsteps under ground. The chief of the village, with a party of its elders, who have fasted the preceding day, await his return at the dry well, the presence of women at which would be fatal, while that of youths is also interdicted. The deserted basin is now cleared out, and the cocoon cup of water is placed in it. The priest sacrifices a sheep or a hog to Sugu Pennu, and he, if become propitious, either restores the spring at once, or gives signs of satisfaction from which its reappearance may be confidently hoped.

Joogah Pennu—Goddess of Small Pox.

Joogah Pennu, the Godess of Small Pox, is a dread power which cannot be appeased by any worship, and for which the Khonds have no distinct place in their mythology. This deity in her wrath "sows small-pox upon mankind as men sow seed upon the earth." When this disease appears in a village, all desert it save a few who remain to offer continually the blood of buffaloes, hogs, and sheep to the terrible power. The people of the neighbouring hamlets can but attempt to prevent her approach by barricading the paths with thorns and deep ditches, and boiling upon them cauldrons of stinking oils.

SECTION III.—FEMALE INFANTICIDE.

The practice of female infanticide is, I believe, not wholly unknown amongst any portion of the Khond people, while it exists in some of the tribes of the sect of Boora to such an extent, that no female infant is spared, except when a woman's first child is a female, and that villages containing a hundred houses may be seen without a female child.

The custom has its origin in the ideas and usages which regulate the relations of the sexes, and especially the conditions of marriage, amongst these tribes; while, moreover, it is expressly sanctioned and promoted by their religious doctrines.

I can here but very briefly advert to the customs and feelings which the practice of infanticide alternately springs from and produces. The influence and privileges of women are exceedingly great amongst the Khonds, and are, I believe, greatest amongst the tribes which practise infanticide. Their opinions have great weight in all public and private affairs; and their direct agency is often considered essential in the former. Thus, the presence of the sisters and daughters of a tribe is indispensable at its battles, to afford aid and encouragement; and the intervention of its wives, who are neutral between the tribes of their fathers and those of their husbands, is necessary to make peace. The Khond women frequently settle difficult questions between their tribes and the Rajahs, through the ladies of these, with whom they are always in communication; while these ladies, it may be observed, are employed on critical occasions as irresistible instruments to sway the Khond chiefs.

But the ascendancy of Khond women in these tribes is completed by their extraordinary matrimonial privileges; with respect to which, however, it is to be borne in mind, that intermarriage between persons of the same tribe, however large or scattered, is considered incestuous, and punishable by death.

So far is constancy to her husband from being required in a wife, that her pretensions do not, at least, suffer diminution in the eyes of either sex when fines are levied on her convicted lovers; while, on the other hand, infidelity on the part of a married man is held to be highly dishonourable, and is often punished by deprivation of many social privileges. A wife, moreover, may quit her husband at any time, except within a year of her marriage,

or when she expects offspring, or within a year after the birth of a child; and she may then return to her father's house, or contract a new marriage; while no man who is without a wife may, without entailing disgrace on himself and his tribe, refuse to receive any woman who may choose to enter his house and establish herself as its mistress.

Now, a bridegroom gives for a wife of these tribes in which so few women are brought up, a large consideration in cattle and money. The sum is chiefly subscribed by his near relatives and his branch of his tribe, and is paid to his wife's father, who, again, distributes it amongst the heads of families of his own branch. But, when a wife quits her husband, he has a right to reclaim immediately from her father the whole sum paid for her; while the father, at the same time, becomes entitled to levy a like sum from any new husband to whom she may attach herself. And, it being observed that every man's tribe is at once answerable for all his debts and bound in honour to enforce his claims, it will be understood that these restitutions and exactions, whether to be made betwixt persons belonging to different tribes or to different branches of the same tribe, must be, even in the simplest cases, productive of infinite difficulty and vexation; while they have given rise to three-fourths of the sanguinary quarrels and hereditary feuds which distract the Khond country. Thence, say the Khonds—"To any man but a rich and powerful chief, who desires to form connexions, and is able to make large and sudden restitutions, and to his tribe —a married daughter is a curse. By the death of our female infants before they see the light, the lives of men without number are saved, and we live in comparative peace."

With respect to the religious sanction of this practice, these tribes believe, as I have already observed, that Boora, contemplating the deplorable consequences of the creation of the first feminine being, his consort, charged men, or gave them express permission to bring up only as many females as they should find consistent with the good of society. Now, while they believe that souls condemned by Dinga to pass successive lives upon earth are ever reborn in the tribes in which they were first born and received, they conceive that the reception of a soul into a tribe, when it is first sent to animate a human form, is completed only on the performance of the ceremony of naming the infant on the seventh day after its birth; and they hold the curious doctrine, moreover, that Boora sets

apart a certain quantity of soul to be distributed amongst each generation of mankind. Thence they believe that should an infant die before it is named, its soul does not enter into the circle of tribal spirits to be reborn as often as Dinga wills, but rejoins the mass of spirit set apart for the generation to which it belongs. And thus, by the destruction of a female infant, either the addition of a new female soul to the number of spirits attached to a tribe is prevented, and the chance of getting a new male spirit in its place is gained, or the return of a female soul by re-birth in that tribe is postponed.

But the exclusion of new female spirits from a tribe is believed by these Khonds to be of high importance upon another ground. They believe that, of the quantity of soul allotted by Boora to each generation, the less that is assigned to the women, the more will remain for the men, whose mental powers will be proportionately improved. And the first prayer of every Khond being for many and highly endowed male children, the belief that the mental qualities of these may be raised by the destruction of the female infants, is no slight incentive to the practice, superadded to the motives afforded by the belief that the number of the males may be increased by it, that it is expressly permitted by Boora, and that it averts much of the strife and bloodshed arising from the capricious dissolution of marriage ties by women.

The religion of the Khonds, then, is a distinct theism, with a subordinate demonology; and the sum of its chief doctrines is briefly as follows:—

The Supreme Being and sole Source of Good, who is styled the God of Light, created for himself a consort who became the Earth Goddess, and the Source of Evil; and thereafter, he created the earth, with all it contains, and man. The Earth Goddess, prompted by jealousy of the love borne to man by his creator, rebelled against the God of Light, and introduced moral and physical evil into the world. The God of Light arrested the action of physical evil, while he left man perfectly free to receive or to reject moral evil—defined to be "disobedience towards God, and strife amongst men." A few of mankind entirely rejected moral evil, the remainder received it. The former portion were imme-

diately deified; the latter were condemned to endure every form of physical suffering, with death, deprivation of the immediate care of the Creator, and the deepest moral degradation. Meanwhile, the God of Light and his rebel consort contended for superiority, until the elements of good and evil became thoroughly commingled in man and throughout nature.

Up to this point the Khonds hold the same general belief, but from it they divide into two sects directly opposed upon the question of the issue of the contest between the two antagonist powers.

One sect holds, that the God of Light completely conquered the Earth Goddess, and employs her—still the active principle of evil—as the instrument of his moral rule. That he resolved to provide a partial remedy for the consequences of the introduction of evil, by enabling man to attain to a state of moderate enjoyment upon earth, and to partial restoration to communion with his Creator after death. And that, to effect this purpose, he created three classes of subordinate deities, and assigned to them the office—first, of instructing man in the arts of life, and regulating the powers of nature for his use, upon the condition of his paying to them due worship; secondly, of administering a system of retributive justice, through subjection to which, and through the practice of virtue during successive lives upon earth, the soul of man might attain to beatification.

The other sect hold, upon the other hand, that the Earth Goddess remains unconquered; that the God of Light could not, in opposition to her will, carry out his purpose with respect to man's temporal lot; and that man, therefore, owes his elevation from the state of physical suffering into which he fell through the reception of evil, to the direct exercise of her power to confer blessings, or to her permitting him to receive the good which flows from the God of Light, through the inferior gods, to all who worship them. With respect to man's destiny after death, they believe that the God of Light carried out his purpose. And they believe that the worship of the Earth Goddess by human sacrifice, is the indispensable condition on which these blessings have been granted, and their continuance may be hoped for; the virtue of the rite availing not only for those who practise it, but for all mankind.

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